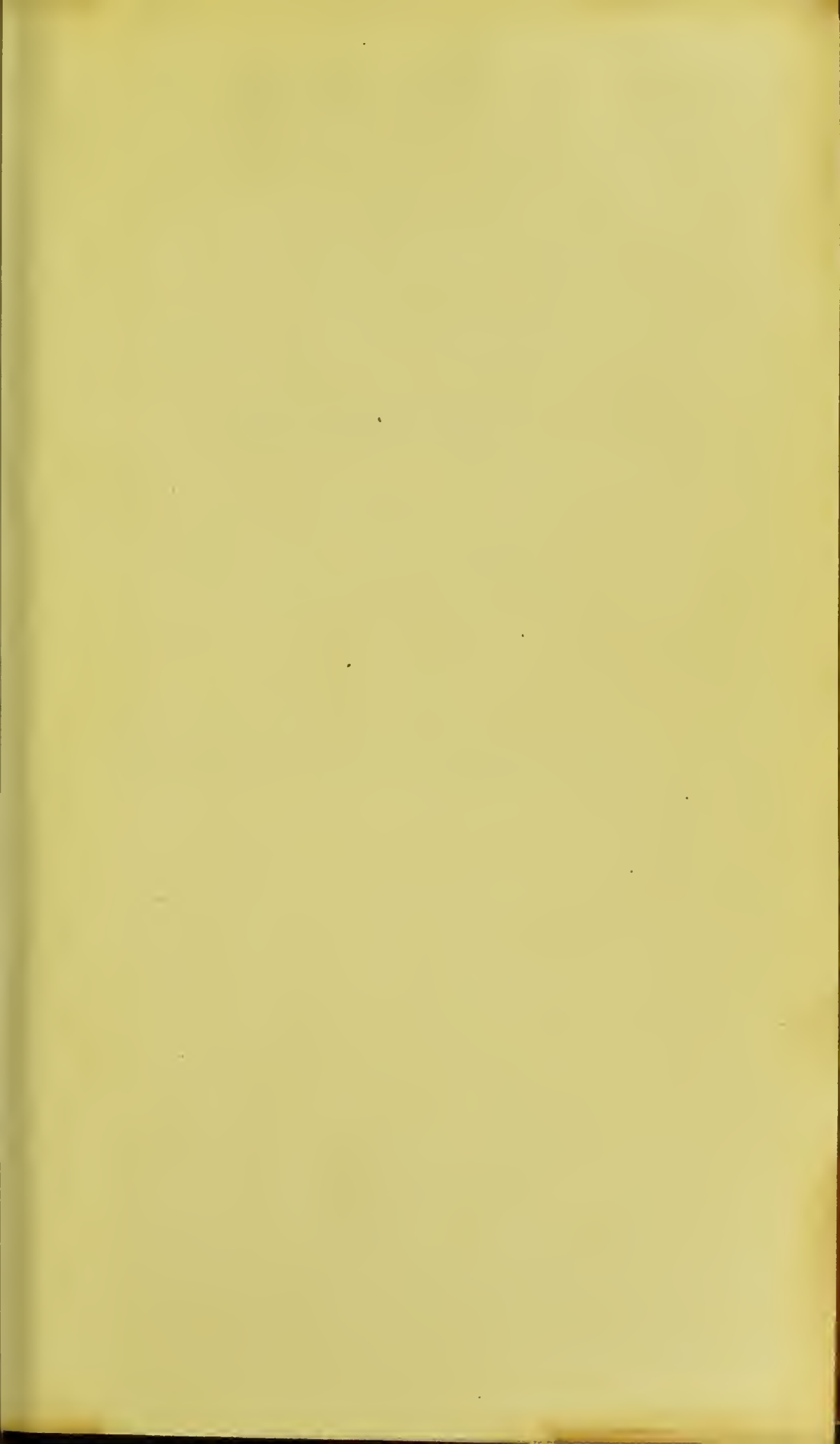
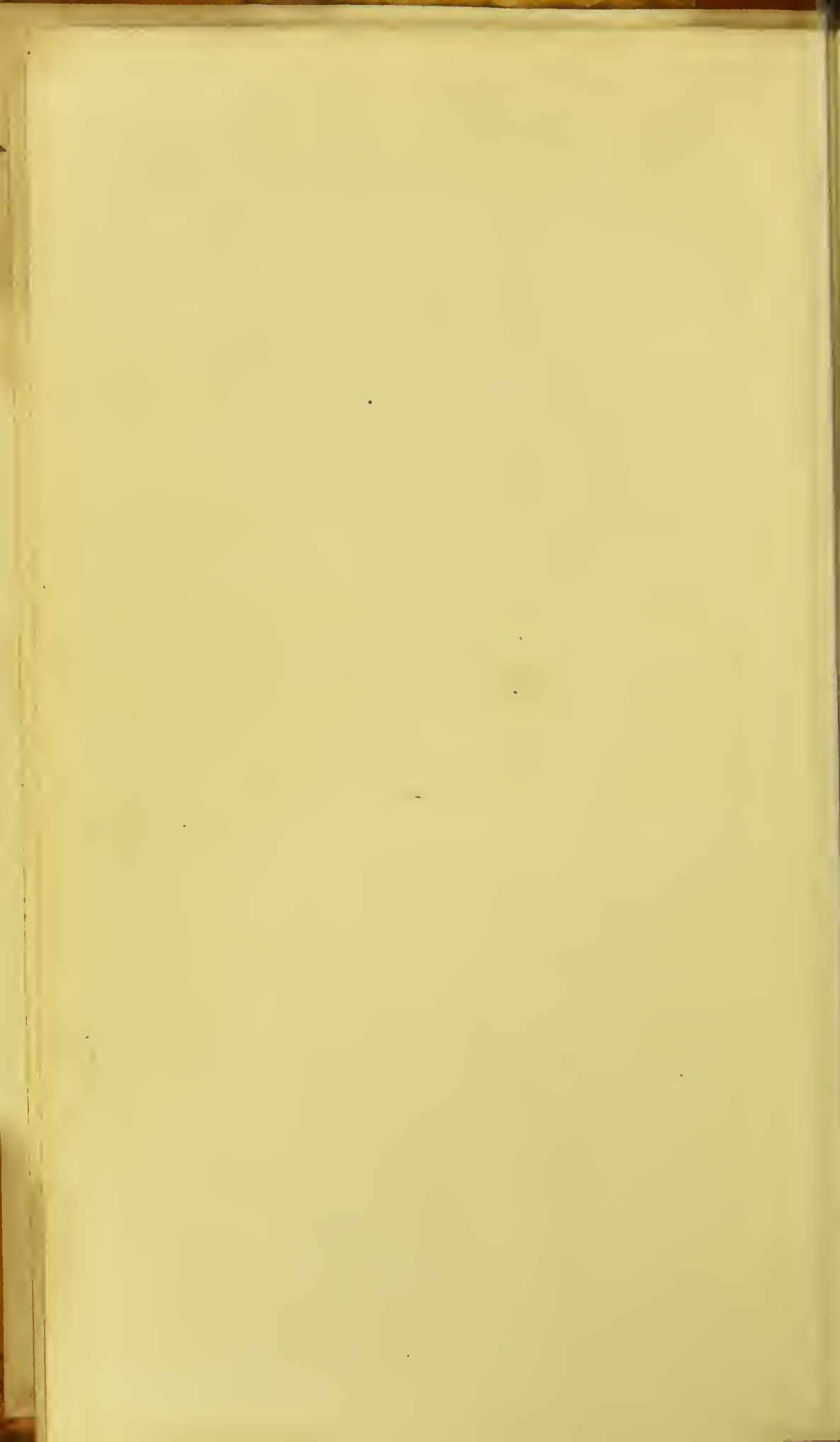




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Dr. Home
with the author's Last wishes

MEMOIRS

OF THE

LIFE AND WRITINGS

OF

THOMAS PERCIVAL, M.D.



MEMOIRS

OF THE

LIFE AND WRITINGS

OF

THOMAS PERCIVAL, M.D.

F.R.S. AND A.S.—F. R. S. AND R.M.S. EDIN.

LATE PRES. OF THE LIT. AND PHIL. SOC. AT MANCHESTER; MEMBER OF
THE ROYAL SOCIETIES OF PARIS AND OF LYONS, OF THE MEDICAL
SOCIETIES OF LONDON, AND OF AIX EN PROvence, OF THE
AMERIC. ACAD. OF ARTS, &c. AND OF THE AMERIC.
PHIL. SOC. AT PHILADELPHIA.

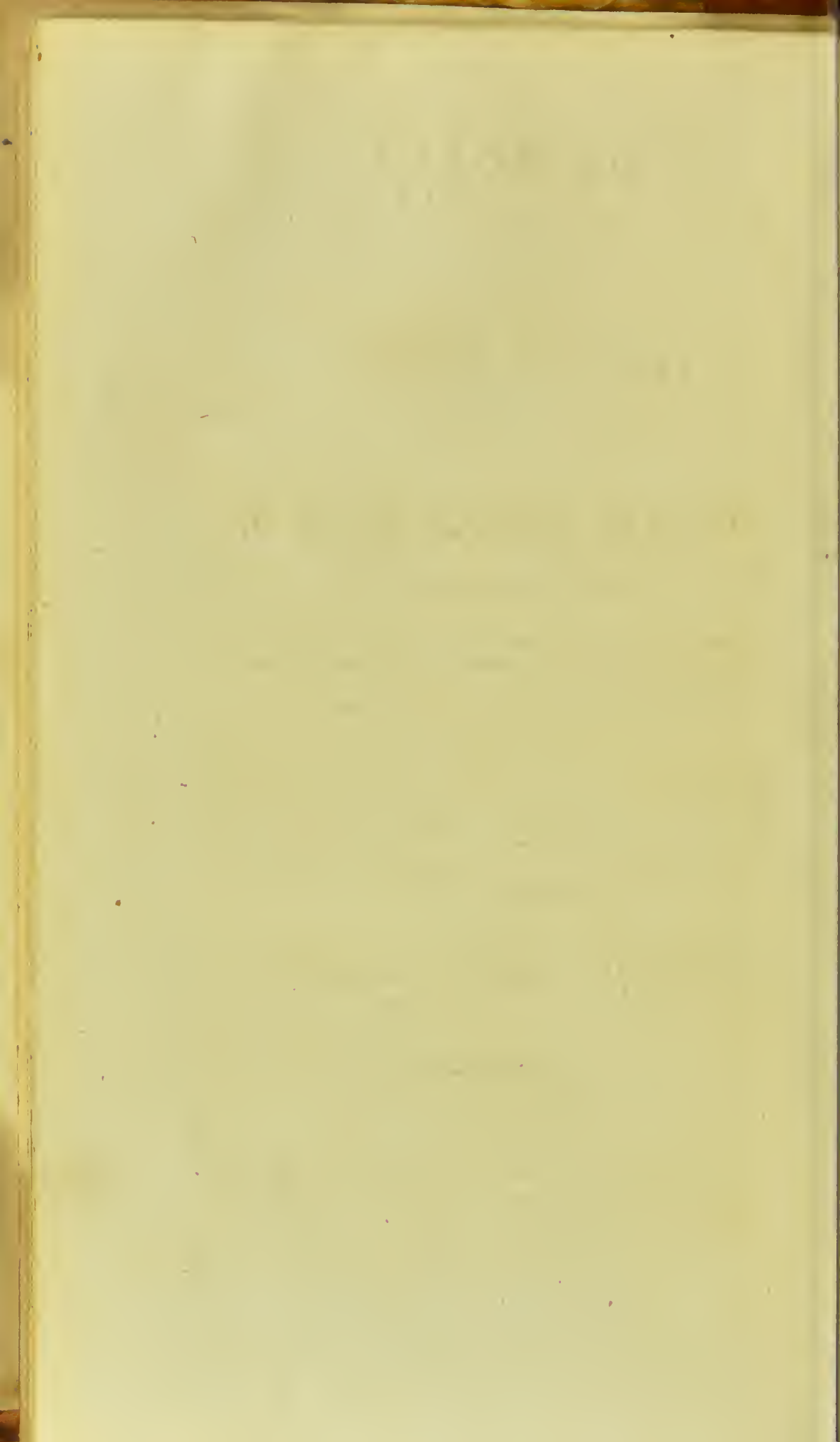
TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A SELECTION FROM HIS

LITERARY CORRESPONDENCE.

PRINTED BY RICHARD CRUTTWELL, ST. JAMES'S-STREET, BATH;
FOR J. JOHNSON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD, LONDON.

1807.



ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Public is, in these volumes, presented with an entire collection of the Literary, Moral, and Medical Writings of Dr. Percival. The parts which are now for the first time published, are chiefly the following; “An Inaugural Dissertation, De Frigore;”—some additional Notes and Amendments to the “Medical Ethics;”—a Biographical Tribute to the Memory of Thomas Butterworth Bayley, esq; of Hope-hall, near Manchester;—and a selection from the Literary Correspondence of Dr. Percival, incorporated with the Memoirs of his Life and Writings.

Agreeably to the judicious sentiment of Sir William Jones, that “the best monument which can be erected to a man of literary talents is a good edition of his works;” the Editor of the present publication is solicitous to perform this office of filial regard for the memory of a much-loved and respected parent; whilst he is little apprehensive for the fate of an entire collection, of which the distinct parts have already been honoured with general approbation.—To these Works he has ventured to prefix a Biographical Narrative, with the diffident hope of extending the reputation of an eminent writer, by a record of the transactions of his private

and literary Life. Although the uniform tenor of professional avocations, diversified only by the liberal and tranquil pursuit of letters, furnish few materials for personal biography; yet happily the vicissitudes of extraordinary fortune are not essential to illustrate the attributes of virtue, or the labours of science. To some it may not be uninteresting to pursue the progress of a Man of Letters through the simple incidents of a career, which afforded leisure for private occupation, and scope for conduct marked by the peculiarities of his genius; nor can it be wholly uninteresting to trace in the familiar actions of a grave and refined philosopher a conformity with the precepts contained in his moral writings. The image of Dr. Percival's mind, which is impressed on the more durable monuments of his fame, may, it is probable, have served rather to excite than to gratify the public curiosity respecting the passages of his life, and the features of his character; and the design of the following Memoirs will be fulfilled, if they serve to exhibit a pleasing assemblage of moral and intellectual endowments, a series of unwearied efforts in the cause of learning and humanity, and a life spent in active exertions for the public and domestic good, unblemished by a single circumstance which it would be painful to recite. The simple record of such a life, it is beautifully observed by a very distinguished writer,* may derive an interest even from its uniformity; and, when contrasted with the turbulent events of the passing scene, may lead the thoughts to some views of human nature, on which it is not ungrateful to repose.

* Professor Dugald Stewart: *Life of Reid*.

TO

JOHN HAYGARTH, M.D.

F.R.S. LOND.—F.R.S. AND R.M.S. EDIN. MEMBER
OF THE AMERIC. ACAD. OF ARTS AND
SCIENCES; AND OF THE LIT. AND
PHIL. SOC. OF MANCHESTER.

DEAR SIR,

PERMIT me to address to your protection these volumes of my Father's LITERARY, MORAL, and MEDICAL WRITINGS. To you I am prompted to offer them, not only from a sense of your talents and candour in estimating their various merit; but allow me to add, from the conviction that such an offering would have accorded most gratefully with the sentiments of their late venerated AUTHOR. Your friendship He valued among the earliest, the most durable, and the most affectionate which his life afforded. Nor did he esteem it a slight honour to enjoy, without interruption, an unreserved and liberal intercourse with one so eminently distinguished by professional skill and active philanthropy.

In addressing you, I need not explain the motives which dictated the works contained in the present publication. The circumstances of their origin, and

the purposes they were designed to fulfil, were commonly submitted to your consideration, before the works themselves were communicated to the Public. Their intrinsic utility was discussed with the freedom and zeal which are inestimable in the friendships of men of letters, whilst newlights were struck out, which contributed to their illustration or improvement.

In extending the protection of your Name to the Biographical Memoir prefixed to these volumes, I am not insensible that I seek at the same time the indulgence of your criticism, and your approbation of the fidelity of the narrative. But the former, I am persuaded, you will readily accord; nor can I withhold the pleasing though flattering assurance, that, in the following pages, your candour will recognize the faithfulness of the writer's design, even where his success has been least adequate to his wishes.

Permit me also to assure myself that you will receive this Address, as a testimony of the sincere respect and perfect esteem with which I remain,

Dear Sir,

Your most obliged friend,

And faithful servant,

EDWARD PERCIVAL.

Bath, Jan. 1807.

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“ Hic liber, professione pietatis, aut laudatus erit aut excusatus.”

TACIT.

*“ Mihi quidem, quanquam est subito ereptus, vivit tamen semperque
vivit. Virtutem enim amavi illius viri quæ extincta non est ;
nec mihi soli versatur ante oculos, sed etiam posteris erit clara
et insignis.”*

CICERO.

MEMOIRS
OF THE
LIFE AND WRITINGS
OF
THOMAS PERCIVAL, M. D.

THOMAS PERCIVAL, the subject of these Memoirs, descended from a family of respectable condition, formerly resident at Thelwall, in the county of Chester. His remote ancestors were occupied in the cultivation of the patrimonial estate; a farm of moderate extent, which has been lineally transmitted to the present generation. The slender fortunes of his line were compensated by intellectual endowments, and hereditary worth. His more immediate predecessors applied with diligence and success to the study of science; and the fame which they acquired by the exercise of a liberal and lucrative profession, appears to have awakened his early ambition of literary eminence.

His grandfather, Peter Percival, was the first who quitted the patrimonial habitation. Destined by birth to the scanty inheritance of a younger son, he was induced to seek a more ample fortune by embracing the profession of physic; and accordingly devoted himself to the usual methods of preparatory study. With the view to a more extended sphere of practice than his native village afforded, he fixed his residence at Warrington, in Lancashire; where he lived with decent hospitality and creditable fame. The lady also whom he married, (Martha Worsley, the daughter of Mr. Worsley, of Sutton, in the same county,) appears to have been remarkable for the attainments of her understanding, and the exemplary virtue of her life. Her sister, Mrs. Mather, is known by the correspondence which she held on theological subjects with the celebrated Bishop Burnet, by whom she was greatly esteemed.

. In the year 1701, Peter Percival died, leaving an issue of four sons and one daughter. Of these, the eldest son, Thomas Percival, adopted the profession of his father; and by his superior talents augmented the reputation of his name. The following sketch, from the pen of his successor, describes his worth and accomplishments: “ He received his classical educa-

“ tion at the free grammar-school of Warrington;
 “ an institution well endowed, formerly much resorted
 “ to and held in great estimation. From this femi-
 “ nary he removed to Leyden; where he became
 “ the pupil of the celebrated Boerhaave; and com-
 “ bined with his medical pursuits the study of various
 “ other branches of knowledge. Following the steps
 “ of his great master, he directed his attention to Na-
 “ tural History, Chemistry, Ethics, and Theology. At
 “ the expiration of the usual period, he was honoured
 “ with the degree of Doctor of Physic, A. D. 1720.
 “ His inaugural dissertation, ‘ De Phthisi Pulmonali,’
 “ is written with elegance, perspicuity, and much infor-
 “ mation. The love of learned ease contracted the
 “ sphere of his professional exertions; and his practice
 “ was confined to Warrington, and a small surround-
 “ ing district. But his talents and skill were acknow-
 “ ledged by able judges; and his situation afforded
 “ him a field sufficiently ample for the display of
 “ probity, humanity, and disinterestedness.”

Joseph, the third* son of Peter Percival, was born in the year 1694. Like the rest of his family, he

* James Percival, the second son, removed from Warrington to Liverpool; where he followed the profession of a merchant, during the course of a long life, with honour and reputation.

received the benefit of a prudent and liberal education. But his native disposition was averse from the pursuits of fame or fortune; and he appears to have sought his happiness in the tranquil enjoyment of an easy and respectable station. At different periods, however, he engaged in various branches of commerce; and transmitted to his posterity, in the example of upright and benevolent conduct, the fairest portion of his inheritance. By his union with Margaret Orred, a lady of reputable family in Cheshire, he had seven children, of whom three died at an early age. THOMAS PERCIVAL, the subject of the present narrative, was the youngest, and only surviving son; born September 29, N. S. 1740.

During the period of infancy, his health was feeble and precarious, requiring all the offices of tender assiduity to preserve and invigorate his frame. His youth, nevertheless, was carefully devoted to intellectual improvement, aided by the opportunities of instruction which are tired provincial town afforded. The individuals of his family who had gained distinction by their literary attainments, had excited a taste for knowledge, and even a relish for studious pursuits, among the other members of his domestic circle; so that those who guided his juvenile conduct, were well

fitted by their acquisitions to form and cultivate his mind. At the age of three years, however, he suffered the singular misfortune of losing both his parents by decease at the same time; the death of his mother happening a few hours only after that of his father, whose health had been gradually undermined by the sorrow which her long and painful illness occasioned.

But the loss of parental instruction was supplied to their son by the able and affectionate care of his eldest sister, Elizabeth Percival, the real mother of his understanding and manners. The excellent qualities of this lady, a rare benevolence of temper, and undissembled probity of mind, were in no common degree congenial to the character which she was destined to unfold; whilst the image of her virtues seemed to be reflected in the youthful dispositions of her charge. The purity of her moral precepts, no less than the warmth of her affection, inspired his mind with the indelible sentiment of filial regard; and to the latest hour of his life few reflections afforded him more grateful pleasure, than those associated with the memory of her kindness.*

* This lady had the happiness of witnessing, during the course of a long life, the fruits of her maternal care. She died, at an advanced age, a few years only before the subject of this memoir;

After passing through the usual forms of elementary instruction, at a respectable private seminary in the neighbourhood of Warrington, Mr. Percival was entered, in the tenth year of his age, at the free grammar-school of that town. Under the care of the Rev. Mr. Hayward, (a teacher of considerable fame,) he laid the chief foundation of his acquaintance with the Latin and Greek languages; and by early proficiency recommended himself to the esteem of a rigorous master. His industry and success were conspicuously superior to his years; the zeal of his application so far exceeding the bounds which a delicate constitution prescribed, as to render it expedient, some time afterwards, to remove him to another school, where his labours might be less severe. But the faithful regard of Mr. Hayward followed him to this

who has testified his affectionate esteem for his "foster parent," by recording her virtues, and his own obligations, in a pathetic inscription to her memory.—Possessed of an understanding of more than usual energy, her thoughts were often and deeply conversant with subjects relating to religion; and her judgment in these matters was fortified and improved by theological study. Her favourite recurrence to topics of serious meditation had even contributed to cast over her mind a shade of solicitude, which was sometimes observed to mingle with the deeper colouring of despondency. But her active duties were cheerfully and assiduously performed; and the warmth of her piety was infused into the early sentiments of her charge.

new situation, and at length, through earnest entreaty, procured his return to the free grammar-school, where he remained during several years.

In the autumn of 1757, the Warrington Academy was opened; when the name of Mr. Percival was the first enrolled on a numerous and respectable list of pupils. At this institution, whose celebrity is not unknown to men of letters, he pursued with unabating diligence the classical studies in which he had already made considerable progress. The Latin compositions, in particular, which he executed about this time, display the extent not less than the accuracy of his attainments. In the subsequent and far greater part of his life, the failure of his eye-sight precluding him from the perusal of works in such languages as are not made fluently intelligible by a reader, his intercourse with the writings of antiquity was in great measure relinquished; but he proved the value of his present labours, by manifesting his taste and his skill in composition even at an advanced age.

It does not appear that Mr. Percival applied with much assiduity at any period to the cultivation of mathematical science; nor did his acquirements in that department extend beyond the limited instructions he received during his residence at the War-

Warrington Academy. The study of Ethics, however, which formed an important branch of academical discipline, attracted his early curiosity. Guided by an able master, he explored the various and fascinating regions of moral science; and imbibed a partiality for these pursuits, which, while it prompted his immediate industry, furnished a source of the most grateful occupations of his riper leisure. To ethical he united theological reading; and by observing the salutary custom of devoting the sabbath to these studies exclusively, his acquaintance with them soon became familiar, and even extensive. His relish for enquiries of this kind might, perhaps, be associated with the singular purity or integrity of sentiment which characterised his moral nature. But his labours were encouraged by the assistance and example of a private instructor, to whom he has acknowledged the deepest obligations. This friendly assistant was the REV. JOHN SEDDON; who had been recently appointed minister of a congregation of Protestant Dissenters, and whose abilities raised him to the office of *Rector Academicæ*, or head of the Institution, at Warrington. It may be added, that the reputation of this divine extended widely beyond the sphere of his pastoral connections; whilst his private virtues

adorned and animated a numerous society. The influence, in the mean time, which he acquired over his young pupil, was carefully exerted for the improvement of the latter, in the various branches of knowledge suited to his capacity; but chiefly, as it appears, in directing his ambition or his taste to those liberal studies of philosophy, in which he afterwards delighted to excel. Nor was Mr. Percival insensible to the attributes of piety and benevolence which dignified the character of his guide. The assemblage of virtues which he afterwards ascribed to Mr. Seddon, in a tributary record, seems to have excited in a lively manner his respect and admiration; nor is it unworthy of remark, that the faithful picture of his friend is characterized by features bearing a striking resemblance to his own.*—It may be related in this place, (as the circumstance influenced the early education, and probably the future views, of the subject of this memoir,) that soon after the period of Mr. Seddon's establishment in Warrington, the family of Mr. Percival was induced to quit communion with the church of England, and to espouse the tenets of Protestant Dissent. The sacred studies in which the older part of its members had deeply

* See vol. i. page 33.

engaged, seem to have wrought a change in their religious opinions, accompanied with corresponding sentiments in those around them. The motives of their conversion were unquestionably sincere; and the period of declaration might be produced, or hastened, by a rational preference for the discourses of a liberal divine of Arian persuasion.

In connection with this circumstance, another fact may be recorded, which displays the characteristic integrity of Mr. Percival's mind. Previous to his removal from the Warrington Academy, he had for some time indulged the wish of entering the university of Oxford; but he hesitated concerning the subscription to the thirty-nine Articles of Faith which is required, by *statute*, on matriculation. This diffidence, encouraged perhaps by the suggestions of his friends, induced him, even at thus early a period, to examine the validity of each Article of belief, with all the pains he was able to command. His leisure, he has frequently declared, was for a considerable time occupied by the study of the best doctrinal interpreters, whose writings he perused with diligent zeal. The result of his enquiry, however, served rather to confirm than to remove his scruples; and he at length resolved, with reluctance, to abandon his scheme of

residence at Oxford. As the terms of matriculation at Cambridge were at that time nearly similar, he began to direct his views to the university of Edinburgh; whither he removed in the twenty-first year of his age, and commenced his studies in Medical Science.

Having hitherto cultivated with success those branches of knowledge on which a liberal profession is most advantageously grafted, he now bent his labours to the object of his future destination. His ardour seems to have been excited, and his industry secured, by a long-cherished predilection* for the pursuits connected with Physic; a science or an art allied to an almost infinite range of natural and moral enquiry. In the prosecution of his private studies he

* The source of this predilection may be worthy of remark, as it illustrates the early character of the subject of this narrative. In the juvenile ardour of his mind, he had been accustomed to regard, with singular veneration, the genius and learning of his paternal uncle, Dr. Percival; and to associate with the character presented to his imagination, every attainment suited to the ambition of his future life. These sentiments, derived from his own reflections, or inculcated by his friends, were cherished by him with partial care, and eventually determined the choice of his profession.—At the death of this relative, (in the year 1750,) he received an accession to his patrimonial fortune, which afforded him ample means for a liberal education. He at the same time came into possession of an extensive library, which opened to him the invaluable privilege of a familiar access to books from the commencement of his earliest studies.

had for some time chiefly delighted; and he appears, by the evidence of his confidential letters, to have felt, in a lively degree, that insatiable ardour for intellectual improvement, which is at once the presage and the instrument of future eminence. To this propensity the delicacy of his natural constitution might probably contribute, by preventing the diversion of his taste to pursuits uncongenial with the habits of a student; while his success in the labours of the closet confirmed an early and fortunate partiality. The particular method which he adopted in his medical studies, may at least manifest his persevering industry. After carefully perusing, he epitomized and commented upon the most valuable treatises; he revised again and again what he had imperfectly written; and transcribed, as far as he was able, the lectures of the most eminent professors. His juvenile manuscripts (which happen to have been preserved) testify his application to this laborious process, which laid the solid foundation of his future fame. In the academical societies also, and other meetings for the discussion of scientific subjects, he sustained an active part with no inconsiderable credit; whilst among his associates were several individuals who have since risen to eminent reputation, and whose efforts, like his own, have

contributed to quicken the progress of science and philanthropy.*

Mr. Percival's assiduity in these pursuits, however, did not preclude him from using with care the opportunities he possessed of forming an extensive acquaintance with the literary characters and persons of distinction in Edinburgh. He had the good fortune, in particular, to enjoy frequent and friendly intercourse with the rival candidates for historic fame, Mr. Hume, and Dr. Robertson. For the former of these he seems to have entertained a strong personal regard; nor did he afterwards suffer his veneration of the man and the philosopher to be diminished by his aversion from the polemic. "It was impossible to know Mr. Hume," (he declares in one of his moral disserta-

* Foremost among the number of his intimate friends and companions, was the late Thomas Butterworth Bayley, esq; of Hope, near Manchester. At an earlier age than Mr. Percival, he went to Edinburgh, in pursuit of general science; and an intimacy was there formed, which, in the subsequent period of their lives, was cherished by the most unreserved intercourse, and the constant reciprocation of good offices. [Vide Biographical Memoirs, &c. vol. ii. p.] A friendship, not less valued or durable, was there formed with Dr. Haygarth, of Bath; the most frequent of his early correspondents, and the most intimate of his professional friends. Among the number of his associates, also, were Dr. Falconer, Dr. Aikin, Sir Lucas Pepys, bart. and several others, distinguished by their scientific attainments.

tions) “ without admiring his talents, and loving him
“ for the suavity of his manners.” Their acquaintance was renewed at Paris ; where Mr. Hume was then resident as secretary to the English embassy ; and where, (as the subject of this memoir used to observe,) amidst a crowd of flatterers, *he* alone appeared insensible to the artifices or the seductions of vanity. At the house of Dr. Robertson, Mr. Percival was a frequent guest ; and the kindness with which he was received, left in his mind a pleasing and grateful remembrance. During two winters he resided in the family of Mrs. Symes, the sister of the historian, (and newly-appointed Principal of the university,) to whose recommendation he was indebted for that benefit. His residence was the more estimable, as it facilitated his admission to a society which he knew well to admire and value ; and the connection of friendship formed by this means was preserved and revived by occasional correspondence, to the termination of Dr. Robertson’s life.*

* Besides the society to which Mr. Percival was introduced by his acquaintance with these distinguished persons, and several of the Professors, he had occasionally the opportunity of mingling with a variety of individuals, eminent for their rank or learning, at the weekly entertainments of the late Earl of Hopetown, in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, and of Provost Drummond, in that city.

During three *sessions*, Mr. Percival attended the lectures of the most distinguished professors of Edinburgh. But an intervening year was occupied by his residence in London; where he diligently availed himself of the advantages which that metropolis affords to the student of physic. He at the same time enjoyed the opportunity of extending the circle of his connections, by cultivating the acquaintance of many individuals of eminence. One friendship of peculiar intimacy may deserve notice, as it was cherished on each side by the reciprocation of an almost paternal and filial regard. The person to whom Mr. Percival was thus attached was the late Lord Willoughby de Parham, a nobleman of considerable learning and various accomplishments. His country residence being not very distant from Warrington, the subject of these memoirs enjoyed his frequent and confidential intercourse in his situation of retirement; and amidst his Lordship's numerous engagements in London, the same assiduity of friendship was preserved. The official situations* which Lord Willoughby held in

* His Lordship was Chairman of the Committees of the House of Peers; President of the Antiquarian Society; Vice-President of the Royal Society, and of the Society of Arts; one of the Commissioners of the Board of Longitude, &c.

the House of Peers, and in the Royal and Antiquarian Societies, conferred upon him public distinction; and his house was the resort of the most eminent persons of that time. At his literary meetings he was especially solicitous to introduce his young friend to an acquaintance with the most conspicuous characters; or to recommend him to those individuals, whose countenance might be of service to him in the future course of his life. On the death of this excellent nobleman, which happened early in the year 1765, Mr. Percival lamented deeply the loss of a faithful friend, and affectionate patron.—Shortly after that event, he experienced a gratifying testimony of his late friend's kindness, in being unanimously elected Fellow of the Royal Society of London. His admission had been proposed by Lord Willoughby, who then held the office of vice-president; when from respect to his lordship's recommendation, as well as from the personal claims of the candidate, the Society proceeded immediately to elect him to their body; the youngest member (I am informed) ever introduced into that learned corporation.

In the twenty-fifth year of his age, Mr. Percival removed to the university of Leyden, with a view to complete the course of his medical studies, and to be

admitted to the degree of Doctor of Physic. Some local circumstances of difference having arisen between the professors and the medical students of Edinburgh, a general emigration to Leyden took place at that period. But the high reputation which the latter university then obtained, has long since been rivalled or eclipsed by the advancement of the former. Having defended in the public schools his inaugural dissertation "*De Frigore*," Mr. Percival was presented with the diploma of M. D. on the 6th of July, 1765. Soon afterwards he proceeded on his route to Paris, where his curiosity and his intercourse with the persons to whose friendly attentions he was recommended, detained him some time. On his return, he conducted his tour through various parts of France and Holland, and arrived in England at the close of the same year.

Dr. Percival now joined his family at Warrington without delay; and shortly afterwards accomplished his engagement of marriage with Elizabeth the daughter and only surviving child of Nathaniel Bassnett, esq; merchant, of London. By this happy alliance, the most valuable exertions of Dr. Percival's life were called forth. In the active offices of his profession, his diligence was increased by the prospect of extending to his successors the fame and the benefit of his

labours; and the world has been indebted for the more elegant productions of his studious leisure, to those sentiments of paternal solicitude with which they are faithfully impressed. During two years, he continued to reside at his native place; looking around at the same time to discover an opening to a more ample field for the exercise of his profession. It seems, indeed, to have been his intention to fix his abode at some future period in London: but he was meanwhile desirous of gaining some share of experience and reputation in the country, previous to his settlement in the metropolis. His present views were accordingly directed to this object; when, after a consideration of various plans, he at last determined on residing at Manchester. In the year 1767, he removed with his family to that town, and commenced his professional career, with a degree of success, which, I believe, has seldom been paralleled.

The leisure which Dr. Percival had hitherto enjoyed, had given him the opportunity of engaging in various philosophical and experimental enquiries, relating, for the most part, to the science of Physic. The “*Essays*” which he formed on the result of his investigations, were sometimes presented to the Royal Society, and were afterwards inserted in the volumes of

its Transactions; at other times, they were communicated to the public through the medium of the most current periodical journals. These miscellaneous pieces were, in the course of the present year, collected and published in one volume, under the title of *Essays Medical and Experimental*.

The favourable reception which this volume gained with the public, encouraged its author to pursue the scheme of experimental enquiry which he had commenced. His choice of this method, it may be observed, was directed by a mature consideration of the proper object and means of scientific research; and as he laboured with perseverance in a walk at that time little frequented by men of talents or learning, it may not be superfluous to explain briefly the nature of his design.

The progress of Medical Science, when compared with the number and diligence of its professors, might justly appear inconsiderable, and excite the attention of the more liberal part to the *causes* which retarded its advancement. So recently, however, have the rules of legitimate investigation been generally comprehended, that these causes were imperfectly understood, and often erroneously explained, by writers of Physic in the middle of the last century. Medical

philosophers had not hitherto acknowledged, that the same circumstances which at first promoted, tended afterwards unequivocally to obstruct the enlargement of their science ; or that the vast designs of the Fathers of Physic dazzled, whilst they enlightened, the judgments of their successors. The early structure of medicine, like that of other sciences, having arisen from the energies of *individual* genius, men were accustomed to look for its extension and improvement to the like efforts of extraordinary intellects ; and thus, whilst the multitude neglected the proper use, or abandoned the record of their experience, a few capacious minds laboured to extend their views on every side to the boundary of physical research. On the credit of their own experiments and observation they erected comprehensive systems ; and, possessed of the common faculties which nature has assigned to limit individual experience, they trusted to other powers for the artificial arrangement of her laws. Hence the great and important discoveries which these masters successively made, were so blended with the fanciful errors of speculation, that each in his turn contributed to mislead the opinions of mankind. By mistaking the proper object of philosophy, the inestimable powers of genius and industry were often lavished on

the pursuit of a shadow; and the FIRST PRINCIPLES of medical science seemed destined to be the sport of perpetual uncertainty.

It may not, indeed, appear unaccountable, that a science extending over the animal and intellectual, as well as the material, kingdom, should continue longer involved in conjectural hypothesis, than the more abstract or limited subjects of investigation. The success, however, with which philosophers had begun to elucidate other departments of experimental knowledge, at length served to communicate its proper light to medical enquiry. The error was gradually acknowledged, of attempting to gain the mastery over so comprehensive a science by the solitary powers of the most vigorous capacity; and a more adequate method was silently adopted, which, by exercising the reason and experience of an indefinite multitude, and by distributing its labours in due arrangement, has brought them to bear with united advantage on the same common object. The most enlightened and powerful minds have been diverted from the formation of systems, to the accurate scrutiny and faithful record of the facts which are cognizable by their senses; whilst men of humbler talents, who formerly received with acquiescence the opinions of their

superiors, have since laboured with them in the same field of experiment and research. The benefit of this wide co-operation has greatly exceeded the simple measure of the truths which have been accumulated. Nor would it be an exaggeration to assert, that the splendid discoveries in experimental science which recent times have witnessed, are to be ascribed solely to the more extended influence of those rules of legitimate philosophy, which Lord Bacon attempted, two centuries ago, to establish.

In estimating the merit therefore of scientific writers, some preference will be due to those, who were among the first to give a right direction to the industry of their cotemporaries. Although Dr. Percival was by no means the earliest writer of Essays on distinct subjects of Experimental Physic; yet no medical philosopher, as far as I am able to discover, had hitherto so clearly unfolded, or pursued through so considerable a series, the objects of this practical design. The merits of the scheme are unquestionable; and the merits of the writer may be esteemed of superior excellence, because he has risen above the common prejudices of the times, and anticipated, in some degree, that enlightened order of enquiry, which has since more generally prevailed.

In the two preliminary essays of the volume just mentioned, the author was at some pains to investigate and correct the errors to which medical writers are peculiarly liable. The first, entitled "The Dogmatic," exhibits the pernicious tendency of adhering to pre-conceived opinions, in defiance or perversion of actual experience. The other, "The Empiric," exposes the folly of mistaking solitary facts for universal truths. By removing the influence of these misapprehensions, the writer hoped to recommend a more liberal spirit of enquiry; and to redeem from the confusion of factitious error the simple and perfect order of nature. "The annals of medicine," he declares, "abound with instances of the fatal effects of empiricism and hypothetical reasoning, founded on fictitious principles. But these examples, painful as they are to a feeling mind, impeach not the honour, or the usefulness, of the healing art; and are chargeable only on the ignorance of a few of its professors, and the credulity of mankind. The history of the Christian Church presents us with a picture still more shocking to humanity. But who disputes the influence of religion to promote the peace, order, and happiness of society, because superstition hath occasioned so

“ much confusion, misery, and devastation? It is
 “ sincerely to be lamented, that juster ideas are not
 “ formed of the nature, extent, and objects of medi-
 “ cine in general; and of the several branches into
 “ which, as a practical science, too extensive for any
 “ individual to exercise, it is now divided.” In a
 subsequent publication, Dr. Percival observes, that
 “ the great Lord Verulam recommends the collecting
 “ of facts, observations, and experiments, as the best
 “ method of promoting the improvement of physic;
 “ and experience hath fully evinced the utility of
 “ such a plan. In this way,” he adds, “ I am am-
 “ bitious of contributing my mite to the general
 “ stock of knowledge; and shall think myself happy,
 “ if I can thus render the pursuit of my own instruc-
 “ tion and amusement subservient to the interests of
 “ my profession, and to the general good of man-
 “ kind.” In the same preliminary discourse, the
 author continues, “ I have annexed a few select
 “ *histories of diseases*, agreeably to the plan of Lord
 “ Bacon; who advises physicians to revive the Hip-
 “ pocratic method of composing narratives of parti-
 “ cular cases, in which the nature of the disease, the
 “ manner of treating it, and the consequences, are to
 “ be specified; to attempt the cure of those diseases

“ which have been too boldly pronounced incurable;
“ and to extend their enquiries into the powers of
“ particular medicines, in the cure of particular
“ disorders.”

It may be just, however, to admit, that the opinions and language of Dr. Percival's writings are not on all occasions equally free from the tincture of *hypothesis*. But it must at the same time be acknowledged, that to preserve a systematic view of the effects of a vast number of operative materials on the living frame, without associating them in the mind, by some general though unseen principles of agency, has hitherto exceeded the endeavour of the most scrupulous and even sceptical enquirer; whilst the imperfections of language have opposed almost insuperable obstacles to the entire rejection of *hypothesis* from medical writings. Thus, for example, of the terms employed about clinical histories, all the active appellations pre-suppose, as matter of universal belief, the existence of hidden causes and inscrutable operations; nor is it unobvious that the whole vocabulary of the science involves a perpetual recourse to figurative phraseology.* Yet

* May it not be doubted whether the primary rules of just reasoning, or, in other terms, of *universal logic*, be hitherto sufficiently understood, to render it probable that a radical improvement in

on a comparison of the compositions of Dr. Percival with those of his predecessors, they will appear, I am persuaded, singularly free from the defects which are here explained; and which it seemed proper to notice, as they might be esteemed exceptions to the sound and legitimate principles of philosophy, which in other respects he has carefully adopted into practice. For the simple elegance of his style, and the more valuable requisites of ease and perspicuity, he was probably indebted to his classical accomplishments; nor have his writings in these respects been surpassed, or perhaps rivalled, by any of his successors.

The prosecution of scientific objects of this nature constituted for some time the employment of those short and scattered intervals of leisure, which were spared from more active duties. But the business of

medical language will be effected in the present times? An illustration, however, of the use and practicability of such an innovation has been furnished by the new Chemical Nomenclature; which has so wonderfully facilitated the acquisition and extension of one branch of physical science. As an artificial instrument, both of reason and memory, it is justly ranked among the most eminent of philosophical inventions. But a task of equal importance, and greater difficulty, remains to be effected, in extending its principles to the complicated doctrines or *phenomena* of Nosology. Even were this accomplished with the greatest care, a small part only of the great *desideratum* in medical language would then be supplied.

a laborious profession, to which long and frequent journies, were indispensably attached, added to the care of an increasing family, and a state of health subject to painful interruptions, were at no period favourable to experimental researches. The habitual energy, however, of Dr. Percival's mind supplied the want of more abundant opportunity; whilst his zeal for the advancement of a favourite Science led him to persevere in those practical investigations, by which alone he conceived it was capable of being enlarged or adorned. The fruit of his labour was the publication (in the year 1773,) of a second volume of *Essays Medical, Philosophical, and Experimental*, addressed to his much-respected friend the Earl of Stamford. The success of the first volume* secured a favourable reception for that which succeeded; and the author was gratified by the praise he chiefly coveted, of having substituted cautious induction for the crude and contradictory speculations which prevailed among common writers.

Having already ventured to exhibit a general view of the design of these volumes, it is not my purpose to enter on a particular analysis of the topics of

* A new edition of this volume appeared some time previous to the publication of the second.

medical enquiry which they comprehend. An outline of miscellaneous and unconnected disquisitions, were it practicable, would furnish little more than a bare enumeration of their subjects. To the generality of readers, such a display might appear superfluous; and to men versed in the science or practice of physic, I presume not to offer any critical investigations. The liberal praise of cotemporary authors, and a long possession of the public approbation, cannot fail to recommend Dr. Percival's "Essays" to studious perusal, and authentic reference.

But the subjects which occupied the writer's attention, do not belong exclusively to medical science. Many of his "Essays" are of a more general nature, and calculated to interest a wider class of readers. Some of these requiring for their illustration an assemblage of facts and authorities from various sources, occasioned a frequent communication with scientific persons in various departments; and the letters which have been preserved shew, that at this early period Dr. Percival had the good fortune to sustain a correspondence with some of the most eminent men of the times. Among other disquisitions of a general nature which his volumes embrace, those respecting "Population and Mortality" are designed to bear a reference to

political not less than to medical science. “ *A Scheme for establishing accurate Bills of Mortality,*” which he had formed with some care, was explained and recommended to general use, in the second of these publications. The plan was approved by able judges, and was in great measure adopted by the superintending officers of the police of Manchester. But the author, conceiving that its utility was not sufficiently understood, pursued his enquiries into the neighbouring subject of Population, with a view to illustrate more fully the benefit which might be derived from the institution of systematic registers of mortality, after the manner he proposed. In these researches he engaged, in conjunction with his friend Dr. Price, a copious and well-known writer on subjects of this nature. He was indebted also for a part of his statistical information to the celebrated Dr. Franklin,* whose acquaintance he had long cherished with peculiar regard. The result of his enquiries and arrangement is perhaps calculated for more important use than is generally known; or it may have happened,

* He corresponded also, on these subjects, with his respected friends, the late Archbishop of York, and Dean Tucker; the latter of whom has adopted his opinions, and quoted his authorities in his own works.

that the scheme being detailed in a work professedly medical, has seldom fallen under the consideration of those, who take an active share in regulating the public police. But whatever be the merit of Dr. Percival's "proposal," the object which he aimed to fulfil is still suffered to remain a great and pressing desideratum in domestic œconomics.

Although it may interrupt the regular course of the narrative, I am induced to insert the following communication of Dr. Franklin, relating to this subject; which may at least be acceptable to such readers as are accustomed to admire the ardour and simplicity which characterized the genius of that venerable philosopher. The letter was written on the receipt of Dr. Percival's second volume of "Essays," &c.

From BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, LL.D. to

Dr. PERCIVAL.

October 15, 1773.

" I have received your favour of September 18,
 " enclosing your very valuable paper of the nume-
 " ration of Manchester. Such enquiries may be as
 " useful as they are curious ; and if once made general,
 " would greatly assist in the prudent government of

“ a state. In China, I have somewhere read, an
 “ account is yearly taken of the numbers of people,
 “ and the quantities of provision produced. This
 “ account is transmitted to the Emperor, whose mi-
 “ nisters can thence foresee a scarcity likely to happen
 “ in any province, and from what province it can
 “ best be supplied in good time. To facilitate the
 “ collecting this account, and prevent the necessity of
 “ entering houses, and spending time in asking and
 “ answering questions; each house is furnished with
 “ a little board, to be hung without the door during
 “ a certain time each year, on which board is marked
 “ certain words, against which the inhabitant is to
 “ mark number or quantity somewhat in this manner:

“ Men - - - - -

“ Women - - - - -

“ Children - - - - -

“ Rice or wheat - - -

“ Flesh, &c. - - -

“ All under sixteen are accounted children, and
 “ all above as men and women. Any other parti-
 “ culars the government desires the information of,
 “ are occasionally marked on the same boards. Thus
 “ the officers appointed to collect the accounts in
 “ each district have only to pass before the doors,

“ and enter in their book what they find marked on
 “ the board, without giving the least trouble to the
 “ family. There is a penalty on marking falsely :
 “ and as neighbours must know nearly the truth of
 “ each other’s account, they dare not expose them-
 “ selves by a false one to each other’s accusation.
 “ Perhaps such a regulation is scarce practicable with
 “ us. The difference of deaths, between 1 and 28,
 “ at Manchester, and 1 in 120, at Monton,* is fur-
 “ prizing. It seems to shew the unwholesomeness of
 “ the manufacturing life, owing perhaps to the con-
 “ finement in small close rooms, or in larger with
 “ numbers, or to poverty and want of necessaries, or
 “ to drinking, or to all of them.

“ Farmers who manufacture in their own families
 “ what they have occasion for, and no more, are per-
 “ haps the happiest people, and the healthiest.

“ ’Tis a curious remark, that moist seasons are the
 “ healthiest. The gentry of England are remarkably
 “ afraid of moisture, and of air : but seamen, who
 “ live in perpetually moist air, are always healthy, if
 “ they have good provisions. The inhabitants of
 “ Bermuda, St. Helena, and other islands far from
 “ continents, surrounded with rocks, against which

* A village, four miles distant from Manchester.

“ the waters continually dashing fill the air with
 “ spray and vapour; and where no wind can arise
 “ that does not pass over much sea, and of course
 “ bring much moisture, these people are remarkably
 “ healthy; and I have long thought, that mere moist
 “ air has no ill effect on the constitution; though air
 “ impregnated with vapours from putrid marshes is
 “ found pernicious, not from the moisture, but the
 “ putridity. It seems strange, that a man, whose body
 “ is composed, in great part, of moist fluid, whose
 “ blood and juices are so watery, who can swallow
 “ quantities of water and small-beer daily without
 “ inconvenience, should fancy that a little more or
 “ less moisture in the air should be of such impor-
 “ tance. But we abound in absurdity and inconsist-
 “ ency. Thus, though it is generally agreed that
 “ *taking the air* is a good thing, yet what caution
 “ against air! what stopping of crevices! what
 “ wrapping-up in warm clothes, what shutting of
 “ doors and windows, even in the midst of summer!
 “ Many London families go out once a day to take
 “ the air, three or four persons in a coach, one
 “ perhaps sick; these go three or four miles, or as
 “ many turns in Hyde-park, with the glasses both up
 “ close, all breathing, over and over again, the same

“ air they brought out of town with them in the
 “ coach, with the least change possible, and ren-
 “ dered worse and worse every moment: and this
 “ they call *taking the air*. From many years obser-
 “ vations on myself and others, I am persuaded we
 “ are on a wrong scent, in supposing moist or cold
 “ air the cause of that disorder we call a *Cold*. Some
 “ unknown quality in the air may perhaps sometimes
 “ produce colds, as in the *influenza*; but generally,
 “ I apprehend, they are the effects of too full living,
 “ in proportion to our exercise. Excuse, if you can,
 “ my intruding into your province; and believe me
 “ ever, with sincere esteem, &c.”

The enquiries to which the foregoing letter refers,
 were communicated to the Royal Society, and inserted
 in the volumes of its Transactions for the years 1774-5.
 The immediate object which the Author had in view
 was, to present a statement of the progressive increase
 which had taken place, during a series of years, in the
 population of Manchester, and the adjacent villages.
 The statistical reports, however, are not confined to
 these places, but comprehend other large and more
 remote towns. From these evidences it appeared,
 that the increase of inhabitants, during some years
 before the date of the enquiry, had been very con-

siderable; and that, in consequence of the extending spirit of trade, and growth of manufactures, the increase was then proceeding with unexampled rapidity. The comparative healthiness of different situations, employments, and modes of life, was ascertained by a series of tables, exhibiting the rate of births, deaths, and marriages, in various places; and the result of these estimates abundantly evinced the insalubrity of large towns and confined occupations. Not only was it proved that, under such circumstances, the causes of premature mortality are more prevalent; but it appeared also, that the general term of life is shortened in no inconsiderable degree; the same habits of life to which the young and the middle-aged fall a sacrifice, rendering the more robust or the more fortunate incapable of supporting the infirmities of old age.*

* VIDE APPENDIX A.

It appears, that about the present period, Dr. Percival had it in contemplation to offer himself candidate for a Fellowship in the College of Physicians; to which he was advised by by his much-esteemed friend, Sir George Baker, who presented to him the flattering inducement of becoming the *first* Fellow of the College, not educated at an English University. This intention Dr. Percival retained for some time; but the favourable moment for its accomplishment was sought in vain; while unceasing professional avocations, added to accidental hindrances, occasioned its

An *Essay*, (which appeared in the second volume lately mentioned,) *on the Properties and Medicinal Uses of Coffee*, may deserve notice in this memoir, from its connection with a peculiar habit of Dr. Percival's life; nor is it improbable, that the Author was led to the experiments which are there recorded by the same circumstance. From early age he had been subject to periodical attacks of severe head-ache, which no caution could prevent, and no remedy could effectually alleviate. The returns of pain, though not regulated by any fixed interval of time, were frequent and similar in their nature. During the less acute stages of the disorder, or during those attacks which did not terminate in regular paroxysms, strong infusions of coffee seemed to furnish grateful relief; more especially when the severity of the pain had previously rendered it necessary to employ opiates. But the tendency to this malady was at all times so great, that very trivial causes induced it, in a slight degree; while errors in diet were invariably followed by more or less suffering of the same nature. The use of strong coffee thus became habitual; and Dr. Percival was accustomed not only to take it as a morning and

procrastination to a period, when the honour seemed to be no longer coveted, and when the extraordinary motive was removed.

evening beverage, but very commonly to repeat it in the course of the night. The result of his experiments on the coffee berry, it may be added, confirmed his opinion of its medicinal virtues, and the propriety of its general use as a remedy for head-ache.

But amidst the active pursuits of his profession, or the retired occupations of his closet, Dr. Percival was not unmindful of the opportunities which came within his reach, of engaging his services in schemes for the public benefit. From the period of his residence in Manchester, he had been a zealous supporter of the various institutions of benevolence which that wealthy and populous town comprehends. His professional duties at the public Infirmary (in which he soon rose to a principal official situation) need not be explained in this narrative. His views respecting "*the internal Regulation of Hospitals*" were first published in a letter addressed to Dr. Aikin, dated 1771; and were afterwards expanded to a more comprehensive form, in a memorial, addressed to the trustees of the Manchester Infirmary. These views were in great measure carried into effect through his own influence, aided by the exertions of his colleagues; and he had the satisfaction to witness the success of his plans, not

only in that institution, but in others to which they were gradually extended. In conjunction also with his early and philanthropic friend, Thomas Butterworth Bayley, esq; of Hope, he devoted no small share of his attention to the encouragement of industry, the improvement of health, comfort, and good morals among the lower orders of the community. Nor should the remark be omitted, that his perseverance in accomplishing designs of this nature was prompted by a spirit of zeal and resolution which other occasions rarely excited; whilst the interest he continued to feel for their prosperity, was more lively than a sentiment of benevolence usually betrays in the most sanguine characters.

In a future part of this memoir it will occasionally recur, to notice Dr. Percival's unwearied efforts in the formation of several public establishments. It may be mentioned here, (in observance of the order of time,) that he was one of the small number of literary patrons who contributed their active services to the support of the Warrington Academy; an institution which engaged in a peculiar manner the attention of the leading Dissenters of this kingdom. From neighbourhood of situation, as well as from early attachment to the plan of instruction, and the general

objects of the Foundation, he had for some years promoted its success by his exertions in various departments. As *trustee*, he took a share in the business and responsibility of its government; whilst he frequently employed his pen, in calling the attention of the public to the existing state of the institution, and in soliciting the pecuniary aid of those individuals who were friendly to its welfare.

It might not be uninteresting, though foreign from my present design, to trace the varied fortunes and progressive decline of a well-known seminary. Attracted by its singular fame, a band of literary characters* assembled under its protection, and flourished,

* The tutors who were first appointed to the Warrington Academy, were the Rev. Dr. Taylor, who removed thither from Norwich, and the Rev. John Holt. The former will be recognized as a copious and learned writer of theology, among the Dissenters of those times; and his memory is still regarded with veneration. Shortly afterwards the Rev. Dr. Aikin became tutor in the department of classical literature and belles lettres. To these persons, succeeded, at different periods, the Rev. Joseph Priestley, LL.D. the Rev. William Enfield, LL.D. the Rev. Nicholas Clayton, LL.D. the Rev. George Walker, and Gilbert Wakefield, B.A.

The above-mentioned graduates, with the exception of the last, were indebted for their academic honours to Dr. Percival's interest with the university of Edinburgh; a circumstance which would scarcely have deserved notice, had it not furnished an opportunity of manifesting the respectable friendship which he had cultivated with Dr. Robertson, whilst a student in that university. As such

during a fortunate, but transient period, with considerable credit. The rapid and almost premature success of an establishment, which derived neither patronage nor support from national munificence, was gratifying to the pride of its founders, and honourable to the independent genius of learning. A succession

testimonies of early distinction cannot but be deemed honourable to the character of men of letters, the following extract from Dr. Robertson's letter to Dr. Percival, in reply to his application for the degree of LL. D. for Mr. Enfield, is subjoined on the present occasion. "I am happy by my zeal in executing this commission to "make some small amends for my former negligence in not acknowledging your repeated kind remembrance of me. I often recollect "my connection with you; and it affords me great satisfaction "to hear frequently of your successful progress in life. I am but "little qualified to judge of some of the works which you sent me; "but I hear them honourably mentioned by those who know their "merit. Your Survey of Manchester is more within the sphere of "my studies, and is a most laudable attempt to introduce accuracy "into calculations, which, however important, have hitherto been "very loose and hypothetical. I am much delighted with your ardour and industry. Go on, and do honour to yourself and to us.

"We wish in this College not to confer honorary degrees, either "in divinity or law, without duly considering the merit of the "candidates. But I am happy when we can confer that mark of "esteem upon any of our dissenting brethren. Mr. Enfield appears "to me a very ingenuous and deserving man. We owe the merit "of having distinguished Dr. Priestley to you; and I hope shall also "have occasion to thank you for our new graduate. Be assured "that I always am, with great respect, your's affectionately.

"*Dated College, Edinburgh, March 8, 1774.*"

of teachers, distinguished by their zeal and acquirements, contributed to raise the institution to a rank of unexpected eminence; nor can it be denied that the literary offspring, cherished in its shade, from the researches of Taylor to the inimitable poetry of Barbauld, have conferred on the seat of their retirement, a name of more than ordinary lustre. A variety of circumstances, however, resulting partly from the peculiar nature of the Foundation, but chiefly from the irremediable want of permanent funds, rendered the conduct of its affairs a long struggle against adverse fortune; such as the vigilance and ability of its guardians were unequal to overcome. The revenues of the Academy, derived wholly from voluntary subscriptions, and incidental contributions, were subject, as might be expected, to frequent and serious fluctuation. The supplies during the most favourable period were barely adequate to its immediate necessities; whilst even a temporary failure was productive of the worst effects, in abating the confidence of the tutors, and shaking the foundations of academic discipline. In the lapse of time, also, the number of contributors ^{was} ~~was~~ gradually diminished; and the few who remained attached to the interests of the institution, became at length weary, in their turn, of

a charge which increased in weight as their ardour declined. The efforts, however, of the governors and the tutors were not wanting to devise the best methods of obviating these fatal embarrassments; and if their labours were not attended with the success which they desired, it may, perhaps, be esteemed doubtful, whether such success can ever be attained without the ascendant security of a lasting provision.

In the year 1775, Dr. Percival was induced, for the purposes of health, and for the pleasure of occasional retirement, to take a country residence in the neighbourhood of Manchester. The situation which he fixed upon was rendered agreeable by the beauty and fertility of the surrounding country, and was distant only a few miles from the town. In this retreat, he passed the summer months of many successive years, where he enjoyed, with little interruption, the leisure which his professional engagements permitted. The operations of a farm seldom engaged much of his interest or attention; but his relish for the quiet and the beauty of rural scenery was a lively source of gratification; while he delighted even more in the liberal occupations of his retirement, than in those active offices which he continued to discharge with unabating constancy. The fruit of his leisure, during

the first summer of his residence at Hart-Hill, was the publication of a small work, entitled, *Moral Tales, Fables, and Reflections*; comprehending a collection of short narratives, for the most part original, calculated to convey distinct lessons of moral instruction. The origin and design of the performance is thus explained by the writer:—"As the following tales
"and reflections will fall into other hands than those
"of the Author's children, for whose use solely they
"were intended,* it may be proper to acquaint the
"reader, that *three* objects of instruction have been
"kept principally in view. The first and leading
"one is to refine the feelings of the heart, and to
"inspire the mind with the love of moral excellence:
"and surely nothing can operate more forcibly, than
"striking pictures of the beauty of virtue, and the
"deformity of vice; which at once convince the
"judgment, and leave a lasting impression on the
"imagination. Dry precepts are little attended to,
"and soon forgotten: and if inculcated with severity,
"produce in youth an aversion to every subject
"of serious reflection; teaching them, as Erasmus

* The volume is inscribed by the author to the Right Hon. the Countess of Stamford, and presented, with an affectionate address, to his own children.

“ justly observes, *virtutem simul odisse et nosse*. The
 “ second design of this little work is to awaken
 “ curiosity, to excite the spirit of enquiry, and to con-
 “ vey in a lively and entertaining manner, a know-
 “ ledge of the works of God. On this account, a
 “ strict attention has been paid to truth and nature;
 “ no improbabilities are related; and most of the
 “ narrations are conformable to the usual course of
 “ things, or derived from the records of history.
 “ The third end is to promote a more early
 “ acquaintance with the use of words and idioms.
 “ These being only the arbitrary marks of our ideas,
 “ such as are most proper and expressive may be
 “ learned with no less facility than the vulgar and
 “ familiar forms of speech.”

How far the present work was calculated to fulfil these important purposes, has in some measure been determined, by more than thirty years possession of the public favour. Not only in this country did the volume meet with an extensive circulation; but on the continent of Europe, besides being read in the original, it was twice translated into the French and German languages.—The most indifferent judge of literary composition cannot, I think, fail to recognize, both in the design and execution of this little work,

the efforts of a superior mind directed to the humble, but important office of inculcating the rudiments of wisdom and virtue; whilst the instructive variety of knowledge, the pure and correct moral sentiments with which it abounds, entitle it to the praise of extraordinary excellence.* The author, besides, had in several respects the merit of originality; as no preceding writer in our own country had aimed at recommending the higher order of virtues, by accommodating the examples and illustrations of their importance to the capacities of children; nor had any attempted, in the language of elegant and familiar dialogue, to associate with the maxims of ordinary prudence, those finer notions of moral rectitude, which dignify the meanest, and elevate the most enlightened, understandings.

I may so far anticipate the completion of this scheme of moral instruction, as to remark, that, in *three successive Parts* of “*Moral Tales and Reflections*,” the author has adapted the discourse through which his precepts are conveyed, to the gradual advancement of the faculties from youth to maturity;

* Dr. Percival adopts as his motto, the following sentiment of Cicero:—“*Quod munus reipublicæ afferre majus meliusve possimus, quam sedicemus atque erudimus juventutem?*”

and, that, the last *Part*, which embraces the more difficult questions of religion and morality, is addressed exclusively to ripe and cultivated readers.

If it be granted, on a slight examination, that the moral lessons contained in the former parts of this work recommend themselves *individually* to the minds of children, by the appropriate qualifications of sentiment and diction; it will not be denied, on a more accurate scrutiny, that, as a *whole*, the design is worthy of superior regard, and more ample praise. Few will be disposed to doubt, that, to implant in the juvenile mind those elementary principles of right conduct which may expand liberally with its future growth, and to gain over the desires to those motives of conduct which maturing reason confirms and approves, are the first objects of intellectual culture. Their importance, in truth, no less than the difficulty of their attainment, is manifest on a survey of the systems of early instruction current among the vulgar; systems, which, at each progressive stage of mental improvement, present a new code of morals, and a new set of opinions, differing more widely as they become further removed from the implicit creeds of infancy. Although such inconsistencies may not in common minds produce that sentiment of unlimited

scepticism, which is observed to prevail among men, who, in the maturity of their powers, have struggled to reform the plan of their intellectual education; yet it must be admitted that they tend universally to shake the foundations of just conduct, by destroying the confidence, and corrupting the testimonies, of moral judgment. To prevent or to obviate these fatal errors, Dr. Percival deemed the principal object, to which enlightened instructors should direct their aims. He was of opinion, that, in order to cherish that simple and confident integrity of character, which is the noblest attribute of our nature, it must ever be found essential to respect the first impressions of virtue and obligation, and to expose to implicit credulity those notions *only* which ~~such~~ subsequent experience may confirm. In this light, it will assuredly appear, that his own writings possess excellencies of the highest order. In bulk, they are insufficient to occupy more than a small portion of juvenile study; but as a model, they may serve to illustrate the wisdom and the practicability of that method of instruction for which they are designed; inculcating, under various forms, the same common principles of conduct, and the same sentiments of pure morality, which the minds of men

under every circumstance of age or capacity, are disposed to recognize.

Were this method of early discipline pursued with care throughout all the studies of human science, how greatly would their acquisition be facilitated! and how perfect the light which they would mutually impart to each other! In contemplating such a prospect, indeed, it may be obvious to remark, that speculative men are often liable to indulge too sanguine expectations of the probable improvement of mankind. A writer, however, who has not unhappily exemplified the real merits of the scheme which he exalts, may be permitted to expatiate with some freedom on the benefits that might result from so important a reformation, were it thoroughly effected. The theory (if it may be so called) of education was a subject which Dr. Percival had maturely considered, and to which he has often adverted in his literary writings. With philosophic observation he estimates the advantages that must inevitably be derived from the early acquisition of right notions respecting morals and religion; and the aids that might be furnished in the progressive attainment both of knowledge and virtue, by associating with the unbiassed passions of youth the purest conclusions of reason. As in mathe-

mathematical science, and the various branches of natural knowledge, the learner proceeds by a regular series of steps, each supporting and confirming the other; so in speculative or moral science, the proper method of advancement is essentially similar; with this difference only, that, as in moral evidence the passions are unavoidably concerned in conjunction with reason, a stronger necessity is superadded, for inculcating with caution those elementary principles on which the conclusions of moral judgment are formed. Among the benefits of proceeding by this legitimate method, not only, it is manifest, would the pains and the mortification of unlearning former opinions, or rectifying former errors, be avoided; but the alacrity of improvement would be fortified by confidence, and the mind would advance without delay or deviation in the desirable paths of truth.

It is apparently under the influence of similar sentiments, that an eloquent and profound moralist anticipates in imagination the arrival of that period, when true philosophy shall have gained the ascendant over the opinions and conduct of men; and when proper means shall be employed to support it by a more perfect system of education. “Let us suppose
“for a moment,” says he, “that this happy æra

“ were arrived, and that all the prepossessions of
 “ childhood and of youth were directed to support
 “ the pure and sublime truths of an enlightened
 “ morality. With what ardour, and with what
 “ transport, would the understanding, when arrived
 “ at maturity, proceed in the search of truth ; when,
 “ instead of being obliged to struggle at every step
 “ with early prejudices, its office was merely to add
 “ the force of philosophical conviction to impressions
 “ which are equally delightful to the imagination,
 “ and dear to the heart ! The prepossessions of child-
 “ hood would, through the whole of life, be gra-
 “ dually acquiring strength, from the enlargement
 “ of our knowledge ; and in their turn, would fortify
 “ the conclusions of our reason against the sceptical
 “ suggestions of disappointment or melancholy.”*

Among other opinions which Dr. Percival held on
 the subject of education, the two following may be
 selected from his writings. They are obviously of a
 general nature ; but as they seem to form the ground-
 work of his more special maxims, and practical di-
 rections, they may with propriety be added to the
 foregoing observations. “ Different circumstances,”

* Vide “ Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind,” by
 Professor Dugald Stewart ; p. 39, 4to.

says the author, “ call forth into action different
“ virtues, and different talents; and the perfection of
“ the human character appears to consist in the num-
“ ber and energy of both, which are found united
“ in it. A variety in the pursuits of knowledge
“ should therefore seem to be most conducive to the
“ growth and vigour of our several faculties : for
“ the activity of the mind, like that of the body, is
“ increased by multiplying and diversifying its exer-
“ cises. The brawny arms of the blacksmith, and
“ the strong back of the porter, are produced by the
“ long-continued exertion of particular muscles; but
“ such partial strength is not to be compared with the
“ agility we see displayed by those who have almost
“ every moving fibre at command. By an unwearied
“ application to one branch of learning, a man may
“ perhaps become a proficient in it. But the less
“ confined his views are, the more easy and secure
“ will be the attainment ; because the sciences, whilst
“ they invigorate the understanding, elucidate each
“ other. It is a fact, I believe, not to be contro-
“ verted, that the most distinguished physicians, phi-
“ losophers, and metaphysicians, in ancient as well
“ as in modern times, have been persons of genera-
“ lity of knowledge. The names of Hippocrates, Aristotle,

“ Cicero, Pliny, Bacon, Boyle, Newton, Hoffman, Haller, and Priestley, authenticate the remark, “ and encourage our imitation.” The bearing and limitations of this general *principle*, when applied to the actual conduct of education, are noticed by the writer with proper care. But its aim is directed chiefly against those visionary, though somewhat popular doctrines, which inculcate a supreme regard to particular genius, and the cultivation of particular powers.*

The other passage which I would quote on the present occasion, relates to the much-disputed question concerning the comparative advantages of public and private schools. “ The acquisition of health, “ strength, knowledge, virtue, and happiness,” says the writer, “ constitutes the primary end of all scho-

* I am happy to observe a coincidence between the opinion which is here expressed, and the sentiments maintained by the Author of “ Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind ;” a work which, in the estimation of competent judges, has been esteemed the most profoundly philosophical which these times have produced. Among other remarks which the subject suggests to the author, he observes, with respect to those persons who have confined the labours of their education to particular objects, or to the cultivation of particular powers, that, “ they must be considered on the most favourable supposition, as having sacrificed, to a certain degree, the perfection and the happiness of their nature to the amusement or instruction of others.”—Elements, &c. p. 27, 4to edit.

“ lastic institutions; and that system of discipline and
“ instruction may be regarded as the best, which
“ most completely insures these attainments, with the
“ fewest exceptions, and in the greatest variety of
“ cases. I have long considered public schools as
“ lotteries, furnishing some dazzling prizes, but at-
“ tended with general loss. The reason of this seems
“ to be, that youths who possess great ambition,
“ united with great talents, experience in such schools
“ very powerful incentives to extraordinary exertions,
“ in the future prospects and dignified witnesses
“ which they afford; circumstances depressing to
“ those of a different turn of mind. Whereas pri-
“ vate schools cherish moderate emulation, encourage
“ mediocrity of talents, and thus are better fitted
“ to exercise and improve the general scale of human
“ intellect. I conceive it will be found, that of the
“ number of men who have distinguished themselves
“ in the different walks of science, the largest pro-
“ portion consists of those who have been educated
“ in private or the less public seminaries. I could
“ give a long list of names in proof of this position;
“ but shall content myself with mentioning Sir Isaac
“ Newton, Mr. Locke, Dr. Arbuthnot, Mr. Pope,

“ Dr. Warburton, Dr. Middleton, Mr. James Harris, and the Lord Chancellor Hardwicke.”

The examples which the author has adduced in support of each of the above statements of his opinion, (which are widely detached from each other in his writings,) serve, perhaps, in the best manner, to illustrate and confirm their truth.* The appeal on these, as on all other questions respecting the practical conduct of life, must be made to the experience of our predecessors or contemporaries; and the writer who attempts to combat the prejudices of Englishmen in favour of public education, will at least find it requisite to adduce in his support the authority of historical proofs.

These digressions, relating to the works of *moral instruction* which Dr. Percival successively published, may not appear superfluous to such as appreciate duly the merits of a writer, who has applied the powers of a superior understanding, to the purpose of

* If it be demonstrated, that the majority, or a greater proportion, of distinguished names, in literature, in science, or in public life, be ranked on the side of private, in comparison of public education, the inference may certainly be granted, that the former method is more favourable to the cultivation of extraordinary talents or learning; whilst, on the other hand, a distinct question remains,—which of the two modes is best adapted to cherish the ordinary capacities and dispositions of our countrymen?

inculcating the elements of moral and religious wisdom. Nor will the explanation of his design be deemed altogether unimportant, when it is considered that his performances are not less conspicuous for their originality than their usefulness; that the author has rendered them attractive to cultivated minds,* by the singular beauty of his style and sentiments; and that his labours were rendered complete, at a distant period of his life, by the publication of more mature and profound disquisitions on those subjects, whose first principles he had already unfolded. The character of a man of letters, besides, is best illustrated by an examination of the scope and the object of his writings; more especially when it has happened, as in the present instance, that he has exercised his talents on various subjects of natural and moral science. Were the writer of these Memoirs, indeed, capable of doing justice to the venerable merits of the individual, who is the subject of them, any apology for the digressions of this nature might be truly superfluous. But as the character of that individual's mind is

* The late celebrated Dean Tucker, in a letter to Dr. Percival, observes, with his usual candour, "you are happy in conveying the most important truths in a dress so inviting, that when children read, old men are instructed."

impressed in the most lively manner on the greater part of his literary productions, it is the business of his biographer to strive at least, to exhibit in a suitable light those which he has bequeathed to the public.

The next publication of Dr. Percival, (A. D. 1776) was a *third* volume of philosophical and experimental “*Essays*,” dedicated to his highly-respected friend, the late Marquis of Lansdown. Among other valuable investigations contained in this volume, there is one which recommends itself to the attention of philosophers, both by the singularity and the novelty of its subject. The Essay is entitled, *An Attempt to account for the different Quantities of Rain which fall at different Heights over the same Spot of Ground*; and was suggested by some experiments and observations on the same subject, which Dr. Heberden had recently communicated to the Royal Society. To that ingenious and original enquirer the merit appears to be due, of first noticing or accurately recording this phenomenon: but he seems to be at a loss for a satisfactory solution of its cause, when he “con-
“*jectures*, that it must depend on some *unknown*
“*properties of electricity.*” The *rationale* which Dr. Percival has pointed out, is at once simple and probable. He maintains, that the *same* laws of elec-

tricity which influence the ascent and suspension of vapours, are sufficient to explain their precipitation, and the newly-discovered mode of descent. Since rain, he argues, is precipitated from clouds in consequence of a sudden deprivation of that electric matter, which, by repelling the attenuated particles of vapour from each other, preserved their specific levity; so, in the descent of these particles towards the earth, a further communication of their superabundant electricity to the surrounding atmosphere progressively expends the repulsive power, and thus causes them to coalesce into drops, increasing in bulk as they approach the surface of the earth. “In consequence of a law of this nature,” he declares, “a much larger quantity of rain will fall near to, than at a distance from, the earth; and a cloud which fills many thousand acres in the higher regions of the air, when the elective fluid operates upon it with full force, may not cover one-third of that extent when it has descended in a shower of rain. To this effect,” he adds, “a precipitation of the vapours contained in a dissolved or diffused state in the lower regions of the atmosphere, and the influence of gravitation in producing a convergency of the drops of rain, will in some degree contribute.”

It is somewhat remarkable, that no scientific enquirer, except Dr. Percival, has given to the public any investigation respecting the probable conditions and causes of this curious phenomenon. Perhaps some additional evidence of the justness of his own hypothesis might be derived from this consideration, —that the greater density of the air in the lower regions of the atmosphere, by presenting more particles, in a given space, for the reception of superfluous electricity, would render the coalescence of the particles of vapour or rain more rapid as they approach the earth; whilst, for the same reason, if it be granted that drops of rain acquire any increase, by attracting the moisture diffused through the atmosphere, this accession will obviously become more considerable in the inferior and condensed strata.*

The *Experiments and Observations on the Effects of Fixed Air on the Colours and Vegetation of Plants*, bear a date somewhat later than the preceding Essay. In the first volume of Dr. Priestley's work on AIRS, were inserted, "Observations and Experiments on
" the Medicinal Uses of fixed Air, communicated by
" Dr. Percival." The interest excited by these en-

* As the opinions of two eminent philosophers, Dr. Franklin, and Dr. Watson, (afterwards Bishop of Landaff,) may throw light on this curious subject, their communications to Dr. Percival are annexed; APPENDIX B.

quiries led him, in conjunction with that active philosopher, to a further prosecution of the subject; when it happened, that, after pursuing a nearly similar train of experiments, they came to differ on a curious question respecting the influence of this *air* on vegetation. The conclusions which Dr. Percival formed were decisive in favour of the powers of *fixed air* in promoting the growth and the preservation of plants; whilst those of Dr. Priestley led him to contend for its insalubrious and even destructive influence. The question is an important one, as it relates to an extensive provision of nature for the purification of our atmosphere, by the œconomy of vegetable life. Succeeding writers, it may therefore be added, have confirmed the accuracy of Dr. Percival's conclusions; which was also candidly acknowledged by his opponent, on a subsequent occasion.

Unfortunately for the conduct of his studies, and still more of his scientific pursuits, Dr. Percival began to experience, about the present period, the first symptoms of that malady in his eye-sight, which afflicted him during the remainder of his life. Its origin he ascribed to the habit of reading and writing in his carriage during his professional journeys to the neighbourhood of Manchester. As these

visits were frequent, and occupied a considerable portion of time, it was an obvious expedient to employ that leisure to the purposes of study; which he was able to pursue with little inconvenience, as the original powers of his sight were more than commonly vigorous. On a sudden, however, he was seized with a total blindness in one of his eyes, which was succeeded in the space of an hour by a violent and deep-seated pain in the eye-ball. As these symptoms gradually subsided, the other eye became affected in a similar manner; and at length, when the pains had ceased, and the sight was perfectly restored, an extreme tenderness and susceptibility of the impression of light afflicted both eyes permanently alike. Without any exterior blemish, or the slightest appearance of malady, the pain frequently recurred in so acute a degree, as to oblige the sufferer to seek refuge for some hours in total darkness. But experience soon instructed him, that an examination of minute objects, or a continued intent observation of any object of sight whatever, invariably renewed the painful affection, which was besides often aggravated by periodical attacks of severe head-ache.

The apprehension of an utter loss of sight (which to studious and professional men is peculiarly grievous)

might reasonably be expected to excite some solicitude; especially as its approach in the present instance seemed to be so clearly marked, that the event was for some time deemed inevitable. During a short period, Dr. Percival was compelled to abandon those pursuits which could no longer be conducted without the assistance of others: but the interval of entire cessation from literary pursuits was not considerable; and habit soon reconciled him to the indispensable custom of employing amanuenses. In the subsequent course of his life, scarcely any alteration was observable in the extreme sensibility of the nerves of his eye, or the tendency to acute pain, on any trifling exertion beyond the ordinary limit; so that in all the operations of study he became dependent on the offices of a domestic assistant. It may be observed, however, that the facility which he acquired in dictating his literary compositions, and various correspondence, was singularly happy; whilst in listening to the reading of others, he used to assert, that he experienced a sensible advantage over his former method, in collecting his thoughts, and exercising his faculties, on any subject of serious investigation. Neither did the cheerfulness of his manners, nor the habitual serenity of his temper, suffer in the slightest

degree, from the pressure of an unceasing and irremediable evil.

In the year 1777, Dr. Percival was unanimously elected Fellow of the Royal Society at Paris; an honour which was conferred without solicitation, and accompanied by some flattering marks of distinction. The only productions of his pen, during this and the following year, was a second volume of his *Moral Tales, Fables, and Reflections*, written upon the same plan, and for the same purposes as the former, and a *Socratic Discourse on Truth and Faithfulness*. The latter, (which was not published, but printed only for the author's distribution,*) was originally intended

* Previous to the publication of this *Discourse*, which did not take place until some years afterwards, the piece found its way into France; where an elegant translation of it appeared from the pen of M. Boulard, a Parisian advocate of some eminence. In a short and complimentary Preface, (although the parties were mutually unknown to each other,) the Translator observes, that the only faults of the original performance are, the occasional mixture of *fiction* with *real* history, and certain *Traits de Protestantisme*; the latter of which are carefully pointed out, and remedied by appropriate NOTES. In other respects he liberally commends, and somewhat ambitiously expatiates on, the design of his author. The supposed errors just noticed, says he, "*Sont les seules taches de cet ouvrage, qui joint agrément à l'utilité, et qui mérite la reconnaissance des pères de famille. On ne peut que sçavoir gré à un Médecin, très distingué dans son état, d'employer ses moments de loisir à cultiver les Lettres, qui font le charme de la vie, élèvent l'ame, guérissent*

as the commencement of a series of Moral Essays, in the Socratic manner of colloquial dissertation; and the writer has thus explained the scheme of his work:—"The Discourse forms the first part of a plan which he has long had in contemplation, of teaching his elder children the most important branches of Ethics, viz. *veracity, faithfulness, justice, and benevolence*, in a systematic and experimental manner, by examples. But various causes," it is added, "have hitherto prevented, and will probably continue to prevent, the completion of his design. He cordially wishes, therefore, that some moralist of more leisure and superior abilities, into whose hands this piece may fall, would execute in its full extent what is here so partially and imperfectly attempted."

"les préjugés, étendent les idées, fortifient l'esprit, préservent de l'oisiveté et du vice, et inspirent l'humanité, le désintéressement, et l'amour du bien public. Ce délasement le plus noble de tous, a été celui des plus grands Magistrats, tels que les P^r Hopital, les de Têcu, les Lamoignon, les Montesquieu, et les Daguesseau. Les affaires publiques, dont ils étoient chargés, ne les empêchoient pas de vivre avec la Muses, comme l'ont fait parmi nos contemporains Frédéric II. et Franklin, et parmi les anciens César et Cicéron, qui gouvernoient le plus grand empire qui ait jamais existé, et qui nous ont cependant laissé des chefs-d'œuvres littéraires."—Preface de Traducteur.

The scheme of moral enquiry, of which the outline is here sketched, was never completed by its author; nor has any subsequent writer attempted the execution of a similar plan. It continued, however, to be a favourite design with Dr. Percival; who has so happily exemplified its beauty and value, as to make it matter of regret that he relinquished its further practical application. In the most essential respects, indeed, it resembles the plan of his other moral instructions, which aim at teaching virtue, by exposing its *qualities* to admiration, and by leading the judgment and feelings to approve them in conjunction. The merits of the plan are so admirably expressed by Lord Bolingbroke in the following passage, that I am tempted to trespass upon the narrative by introducing it in this place. “ When examples are “ pointed out to us,” says the noble writer, “ there “ is a kind of appeal, with which we are flattered, “ made to our senses as well as to our understandings. “ The instruction comes then upon our own authen- “ ticity; we frame the precept after our own experi- “ ence; and yield to fact, when we resist speculation. “ But this is not the only advantage of instruction by “ example; for example appeals not to our under- “ standing alone, but to our passions likewise. Ex-

“ ample assuages them, or animates them ; sets passion on the side of judgment, and *makes the whole man of a piece*, which is more than the strongest reason or the clearest demonstration can do ; and thus forming habits by repetition, example secures the observance of those precepts which example insinuated.”

The studies which led Dr. Percival to these useful, though less considerable, efforts of his genius, formed in truth the most grateful occupation of his leisure hours. The study of the human mind in general, and especially of its moral constitution, opened a wide field to his speculative curiosity ; while the partiality for such investigations which he had imbibed from the earliest period of his voluntary application to books, seemed even to increase with his advancing years. Of his particular sentiments in Morals, it were superfluous to offer any detail in these pages ; as his own compositions furnish the best statement of them, and of the evidence on which they were founded. But it will be observed by the reader, that Dr. Percival's literary correspondence often betrays his attachment to speculations of this kind ; and it might be added, that his conversation not unfrequently manifested a tendency to philosophical accuracy

on similar subjects. A long familiarity with the topics of moral science having given him an entire command over them on all occasions, the felicity of his expression, as well as the uniformity and *consistency* of his opinions, was eminently remarkable. It is probable, also, had the plan of his life afforded him scope for an undertaking most congenial with his views, that he would have given to the world, in a systematic form, those speculations which were loosely scattered through his writings and conversation; and which, if displayed in the form they appeared to assume in his own comprehension, would have done credit, if I mistake not, to his enlarged and original powers. But carefully as he regulated the œconomy of his time, his leisure was too scanty for the execution of any considerable work unconnected with his profession, the numerous avocations of which deterred him even from accomplishing the limited schemes which he projected. To these, indeed, he seems to have been impelled chiefly by the hope of benefiting youthful readers, and of thus gratifying more effectually, perhaps, than by remote speculations, his ruling desire of contributing to the improvement and the happiness of mankind. The intelligent observer may, nevertheless, perceive, in the philosophic spirit which pervades the greater part

of Dr. Percival's writings, no less than in his distinct ethical dissertations, the traces of those clear and comprehensive views of moral science which the author delighted to form, and on which he built the most flattering conceptions of the probable influence of reason and philosophy in accelerating the advancement of the race.

We come next to a period, deserving of notice, as the æra in which the subject of this memoir, in conjunction with other leading inhabitants of Manchester, established the *Literary and Philosophical Society* of that town. The institution derived its origin from the stated weekly meetings for *conversation*, which Dr. Percival held at his own house; the resort of the literary characters, the principal inhabitants, and of occasional strangers. As these meetings became more numerous, it was in time found convenient to transfer them to a tavern, and to constitute a few rules for the better direction of their proceedings. The members thus insensibly formed themselves into a Club; which was supported with so much success, as at length, in the year 1781,* to assume the more

* In the preceeding year (1780) Dr. Percival sustained the misfortune of losing two children, of early age, within the interval of a few days. The lines which he inscribed to their memory, are inserted in APPENDIX C.

respectable form and title which it now possesses. Of this institution, Dr. Percival was appointed joint president with James Maffey, esq; the vice-presidents and other officers were chosen among the literary persons of the town; whilst a numerous body of members maintained at once the credit and utility of the foundation.

An account of the laws and the literary transactions of this body may be found in the volumes of *Memoirs*, which they have successively given to the world. It were unnecessary, however, were it even agreeable to the limited purpose of these pages, to enumerate the active services of various individuals who co-operated with Dr. Percival in the formation of the establishment.* With respect to his own services, it may be sufficient to remark, that he was a leading supporter of the judicious system on which proceedings of the

* If any deviation be admitted with respect to the rule of prohibiting from a private narrative general or personal details, not immediately concerning its Subject; it may be pardonable, on the present occasion, in mentioning, among the founders of the *Manchester Society*, the respectable names of the Rev. Dr. Barnes and Mr. Thomas Henry. The former of these, an eminent preacher and divine, was one of the earliest of Dr. Percival's friends. Their acquaintance commenced at the Warrington Academy, and was cherished by a common ardour and diligence in the prosecution of their studies. In the subsequent period of their lives the same liberal friendship was preserved, and was beneficially exercised by their mutual efforts

Society were conducted ; and that in the general business of the institution his exertions were employed through life with the happiest success. His attendance at the meetings, (which were held on each alternate Friday during the winter season,) was rarely prevented by any other circumstance than the interruption of health ; his literary contributions were frequent and valuable ; while his active zeal, not less than his candour and moderation, peculiarly qualified him for the leading office he sustained. His powers both of comprehension and discourse were sometimes called forth to considerable exercise ; and perhaps on no occasion were his talents more fully exerted, or more characteristically manifest, than when presiding over the debates of the Society he at once guided and systematized the topics of animated discussion. To these qualifications, and to the inflexible dignity of his conduct, he was indebted for his

in forming several establishments of public utility in the town where they resided. Dr. Percival's acquaintance with Mr. Henry commenced at a somewhat later period ; but their reciprocal regard was not less warm or lasting. The similarity of their professional engagements rendered their intercourse frequent ; and the medical writings by which they are both known to the public, have often recorded their common labours. In private life also their attachment was strengthened by the most zealous and uninterrupted esteem.

annual appointment to the presidency, (by the unanimous vote of the members,) during the remainder of his life.*

Another institution, which originated about this period, may deserve curfory notice, both on account of its intrinsic merit, and as it manifests the ardour in prosecuting schemes for the public benefit with which Dr. Percival and his coadjutors were inspired. The design was in some respects novel, comprising a provision for Public Lectures on the following subjects: 1st, Practical Mathematics, and the principal branches of Natural Philosophy; 2d, Chemistry, with a reference to the arts and manufactures; 3d, the Theory and History of the Fine Arts; 4th, the Origin, History, and Progress of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, the Commercial Laws and Regulations of different Countries, Commutative Justice, and other branches of Commercial Ethics. These Lectures were designed for the improvement of the youth of Manchester; and especially of such as having finished the ordinary course of education, were about to engage in commercial occupations. As the establishment, (entitled *The College of Arts*

* On the death of James Massey, esq; Dr. Percival became sole president, in which situation he remained ever afterwards.

and Sciences) provided only a proper number and succession of teachers, the young men who listened to their instructions exercised that privilege voluntarily and promiscuously. At certain rates of subscription they attended any one or all of the public lectures, which were distributed at convenient hours of the day: and so liberal was the spirit and the wealth of the inhabitants, that little doubt was entertained of the popular success of the scheme.* From causes however, which were then perhaps not fully understood, and for which it would now be altogether vain to enquire, the institution was found to decline even in its first moments; and after two winters of unfavourable trial, was at length reluctantly abandoned.

In the year 1785, the Literary and Philosophical Society of Manchester published the first volumes of its *Memoirs*; which, by means of Dr. Percival's application to the first Lord of the Treasury, were dedi-

* The Lord Lieutenant and the Members of Parliament for the County were nominated patrons; and Dr. Percival was elected president of the institution. The plan and code of rules relating to its proceedings were drawn up by the Rev. Dr. Barnes; and it may be added, that the general design has been imitated and illustrated on a larger scale, in the *Royal and London Institutions*:

cated, with permission, to the King.* The dissertations that appeared in them were selected from a large body of papers which had been communicated to the Society by different persons during a period of four years; and they will assuredly be allowed to furnish no feeble testimony of the learning and ingenuity of the contributors. Several Essays from the pen of Dr. Percival are contained in these volumes. The first is entitled a "Tribute to the Memory of Charles de Polier, esq;" a gentleman of singular accomplishments, who had been some time resident in Manchester, as tutor to the sons of the late Marquis of Waterford, and who had distinguished himself as an active member of the Literary Society. On the melancholy occasion of his death, the president was appointed, by the unanimous desire of the members, to pronounce his eulogy at one of their public meetings; and was afterwards requested to insert the address in their "Memoirs." †

* VIDE APPENDIX D.

* This "Tribute," &c. was so favourably received, that not long after its publication it was translated into the French language, by M. Frossard, professor at Lyons; who also translated into the same language the "Moral Tales, Fables, and Reflections." See APPENDIX E.

The *Speculations concerning the perceptive powers of Vegetables*, (which are inserted in the second volume of these “Memoirs,”) have attracted some attention, as a philosophical attempt to illustrate an ingenious but fanciful hypothesis. The proofs which the author has adduced in support of his arguments, are not only various and striking, but as far as analogy can avail, their authority is decisive. “In all enquiries into *truth*, whether natural or moral,” says Dr. Percival, “it is necessary to take into previous consideration the *kind of evidence* which the subject admits, and the *degree* of it which is sufficient to afford satisfaction to the mind. Demonstrative evidence is absolute and without gradation; but probable evidence ascends by regular steps, from the lowest presumption to the highest moral certainty. A single presumption is indeed of little weight; but a series of such imperfect proofs may produce the fullest conviction. The strength of belief, however, may often be greater than is proportionate to the force and number of these proofs, either individually or collectively considered. For as unncertainty is always painful to the understanding, very slight evidence, if the subject admit of no other, sometimes amounts to credibility. This

“ every philosopher experiences in his researches
 “ into nature; and the observation may serve as
 “ an apology for the following *jeu d’ esprit*; in
 “ which I shall attempt to shew, by several analogies
 “ of organization, life, instinct, spontaneity, and self-
 “ motion, that plants, like animals, are endowed
 “ with powers of perception and enjoyment.” Of
 the facts and analogies which are arranged under
 these *several* heads, the most conspicuous, it must be
 confessed, are selected from those extraordinary pro-
 ductions of nature, which bear a trifling proportion
 to the general mass of vegetable creation. But as a
 regular gradation is observable from the highest to
 the lowest degrees of animal life, it is by no means
 unphilosophical to suppose, that a like series may
 obtain in the inferior world. The author, however,
 observes in the concluding part of the same disqui-
 sition; “ Truth obliges me to acknowledge, that I
 “ review my speculations with much diffidence;
 “ and that I dare not presume to expect they will
 “ produce any permanent conviction in others, when
 “ I experience an instability of opinion in myself:
 “ for to use the language of Tully, *Nescio quomodo*
 “ *dum lego assentior; cum posui librum assentio omnis*
 “ *illa elabitur.*”

Another paper which Dr. Percival contributed to these Volumes, relates to *the Pursuits of Experimental Philosophy*; which the writer recommends with peculiar felicity to those who have leisure and abilities for scientific research. He at the same time expatiates on the value of that knowledge which is derived from a careful observation of the phenomena of nature; and in the search for *general principles*, inculcates the salutary maxim of confining our speculations within the precise boundary of legitimate induction. *Homo, naturæ minister et interpres, tantum facit et intelligit, quantum de naturæ ordine, re vel mente, observaverit; nec amplius scit aut potest.** In moral as in physical science, he saw clearly the fundamental error of those systems which prescribe the study of *universal truths*, or recommend prematurely the process of generalization. Besides their direct tendency to retard the progress of science, by inverting the order of inquiry, he was of opinion that they contribute to cherish a spirit of philosophical scepticism, by leading the mind to confound sensible with speculative truth, and to rest its belief on a mixed foundation of fact and hypothesis, whose union is altogether imaginary. Notwithstanding his admiration, therefore, of the genius of the

* Bacon.]

celebrated logicians of antiquity, he dissented entirely from the methods of reasoning which they invented; nor did the writings of their modern apologists, (amongst whom Mr. James Harris, the most learned and successful, was in other respects one of his chiefly-admired authors,*) inspire him with any higher approbation than must be claimed by their speculative ingenuity; while he embraced without reserve the sounder tenets and more sagacious philosophy of Lord Bacon.

It has already been observed, that in the early period of his life, Dr. Percival devoted much time and attention to the pursuits of experimental philosophy. These researches were for the most part prosecuted in conjunction with his friend Dr. Priestley, who was at that time extending the boundaries of science by his splendid and miscellaneous discoveries. Perhaps at no period was the ardour for experimental pursuits more strongly excited or more widely dif-

* Dr. Percival's admiration of this accomplished scholar and writer, is expressed in the Essay above alluded to, and in several other parts of his works. He esteemed the "Dialogue concerning Happiness" the most acute and elegant specimen of philosophical disquisition, after that manner, with which he was acquainted. The writings of Lord Monboddo (to whom he was personally well known) produced in him no greater disposition to embrace the Aristotelian philosophy, than those of Mr. Harris.

fused; whilst the career of success which attended the investigations of a few philosophers, seemed to open at once immeasurable fields of curiosity and wonder. Some of the results of Dr. Percival's inquiries have already been noticed; and the greater part of them are on record in those volumes of "Essays," which he successively presented to the world.

The active and leading interest which the Subject of these Memoirs was accustomed to take in the affairs of the *Manchester Academy*, may render it proper, at this period of the narrative, to offer a very brief account of its origin and constitution. In the year 1785, several of the principal inhabitants of Manchester formed the design of instituting a seminary for the education of Protestant Dissenting Ministers, similar to that which was on the eve of being dissolved at Warrington. The local exertions of a few individuals were seconded by the liberal aid of a great body of opulent dissenters in various parts of the kingdom. Their numbers alone might render such an establishment a measure of popular interest; and their experience of the benefit and the credit of similar foundations, for the instruction of their clergy, might be expected to secure a continuance of that support. It was conceived that the town of Manchester was in

several respects well calculated for a school of learning; as it was furnished with a large and cultivated society, possessed of one of the most valuable Public Libraries* in this kingdom; and especially as it contained two learned establishments of some fame, the College of Arts, and the Literary and Philosophical Society. Under these auspices, the design was promoted with considerable ardour; and general meetings of the inhabitants were held, (at which Dr. Percival commonly presided,) for the purpose of carrying into execution a scheme so apparently advantageous. In a short period of time, the plan of the Foundation was completed; whilst the subscriptions required for the erection of a public building, and the formation of liberal though temporary funds, were without difficulty obtained.

Early in the year 1786, the committee chosen to superintend the conduct of the Academy published a prospectus, explanatory of the nature and the objects of this new seminary; announcing, at the same time, the appointment of the Rev. Thomas Barnes, D.D. and the Rev. Ralph Harrison, to the Professorships of Divinity and Classical Literature. The internal govern-

* An ancient and extensive Foundation, by Humphry Chetham, esq.

ment of the institution was vested in the hands of these tutors; but the committee, or the body of trustees at large, retained for-themselves the power of suspending or removing them in case of the neglect or violation of their duty. Every appeal also from the inferior members of the Academy was referred to those assemblies; so that the laws which dispensed immediate authority to the tutors, rendered their conduct at all times amenable to the presiding body.

The *primary* object of the Foundation was avowedly to provide the means of a liberal and systematic education for the Clergy of Protestant Dissent. To the *students of divinity*, a term of residence for the space of five years was prescribed; a regular series of lectures and study was directed to be pursued; and in the end, although the Academy possessed no patronage, and supported no inactive members, yet the recommendation of the tutors might have considerable influence, in procuring eligible situations for such as accomplished with credit the exercises of their probation. The expence of their instruction was in the mean time defrayed by the funds of the institution; and some additional support was granted them, by annual stipends from the same source. But the number of this class of students formed a small part of

the whole; and the *secondary* object of the Foundation promised to be amply fulfilled, by the advantages it offered for the prosecution of useful and manly studies preparatory to commercial life. The importance of this object, more particularly in a wealthy and trading district, was indisputable; and as the privilege of admission was granted to all, (even to those who might derive emolument from the institution,) without any test or subscription, its benefits were expected to be universally diffused. In comparison with the English universities, an establishment like the present proposed the obvious advantages of requiring less expence on the part of the pupils, and affording them fewer opportunities of incurring habits unfavourable to their morals or improvement. For these benefits, indeed, the earlier age and inferior numbers of those who might resort thither for education, afforded a sufficient security; but the sanguine admirers of the Institution trusted to its intrinsic merits, for the encouragement of a more liberal ardour for knowledge, and a more unfettered spirit of research, than was conceived to prevail in our ancient and venerable schools of learning.

During some years the Manchester Academy flourished with considerable reputation. Its great pur-

poses were fulfilled by the regular admittance, instruction, and support, of candidates for the Ministerial office; while its utility as a place of general improvement for the sons of commercial men, was evinced by the numbers both of Churchmen and Dissenters who were there educated.—Without venturing to inquire into the causes of the temporary success or gradual decline of this Seminary, it may be observed, (in order to prevent the necessity of again recurring to its history,) that its fate eventually resembled that of the Warrington Academy. Alike designed by prudent and able patrons, and supported by the active services of many distinguished individuals, a longer term of duration might, perhaps, with reason, have been expected; but the vigour of both seemed to languish with the decay of that spirit from which they derived their origin; and an indifferent observer of their fall might thence have embraced the opinion, that such establishments cannot be secured on a permanent foundation, without the aid of Royal bounty, or Parliamentary provision.*

* I am indebted to the Rev. Dr. Barnes, (who, during a period of twelve years, discharged the duties of Professor of Divinity, with distinguished ability,) for the following brief statement respecting the revenues, and the students, of the Academy. The number of the

In the course of the year 1787, Dr. Percival was elected member of “the American Philosophical Society of Philadelphia,” in consequence of the recommendation of his friend Dr. Franklin, the illustrious President of that body. About the same

latter who were admitted from the autumn of 1786, to that of 1798, amounted to *one hundred and thirty-seven*, of whom *twenty* were entered students for the Ministry. The annual revenues of the Academy, from the period of 1786 to the late year, (1806,) reached an average between 220*l.* and 250*l.*. They have never amounted to 300*l.* but have sometimes fallen below 200*l.* per annum.

The Manchester Academy was finally closed in the year 1802; when the residue of its funds, together with the very valuable library belonging to the Institution, were transferred to York, under the care of the Rev. Mr. Wellbeloved. The scheme which Dr. Percival proposed for the appropriation of these possessions, was to annex them to some one of the Scottish Universities; and for this purpose he deemed Glasgow the most suitably adapted. The free access which is there afforded to persons of all denominations, would doubtless be open to *students* of Arian or any other Dissenting persuasion; the steady discipline and regular manners adopted in the *Colleges* would be favourable to their moral character; a wide sphere of emulation would be presented to them; whilst the peculiar habits both of opinion and conduct, which are sometimes cherished among small distinct bodies, would be lost in the various intercourse of a large University. As it is scarcely to be expected that a new Academical Institution, similar to those of Warrington, Hackney, or Manchester, will for some time be again attempted; may it not, even now, be a question of policy, whether the Dissenters might not thus advantageously graft their individual interest on the importance of some large Public Body; and prefer the solid benefits of greater security, and more liberal emulation, to the flattering circumstance of an appropriate establishment?

period, he became also a member of the “Royal Society of Edinburgh,” and the “Medical Society in London.”

It has happened, (I believe, accidentally,) that the *Correspondence* which Dr. Percival maintained with his various literary friends, has been preserved more entire, during some years about the time at present under review, than at any other period of his life. In his own letters may be found a faithful image of the mind from whence they proceeded; a representation of the lively and unaffected zeal with which he employed his services for the public good; and some testimonies of the liberal and enlightened principles which governed his conduct.

No apology, I trust, will be required for interrupting the form of the present narrative, by introducing a selection from these Letters. It may be deemed fortunate, on the contrary, that they supply the history of a period of which a distinct and continued account could not easily have been given; whilst they disclose the sentiments and conduct of the writer on various occasions of more than temporary interest. On some of the topics which form the subjects of these letters, it may be proper to offer a

few remarks, in order to apprize the reader of the circumstances which gave rise to their discussion.

The exertions which have often, though ineffectually, been made to rescue the natives of Africa from British servitude and oppression, are well known; nor can it be forgotten, that the zeal which on different occasions has been roused in their behalf, kindled for the time a flame which spread through every rank of society. To a mind habitually disposed to cherish the strictest notions with regard to the rule of justice and humanity, it may readily be conceived, that the negro trade of Africa, and slavery in the West-Indies, would appear in a high degree iniquitous. The impolicy of the traffic was indeed matter of serious and dispassionate enquiry; in which Dr. Percival engaged with more than common assiduity, as some of the following letters will manifest. But what peculiarly directed his interest to this enquiry, was a circumstance which reflects honour on the town where he resided; the inhabitants of Manchester having afforded the first example of presenting a Petition to Parliament for the *Abolition of the Slave-Trade*. Among the earliest movers and most zealous supporters of this measure, (by which the sentiments of a large and respectable part of the community were

made known to the legislature,) was the Subject of these memoirs. No sooner, however, was a general Address proposed, than it was widely and eagerly acceded to; neighbouring towns imitated the example; and a spirit of enthusiasm in the cause of equity and freedom displayed itself in all parts of the kingdom. Great, therefore, and even unexpected, was the disappointment diffused on the failure of these patriotic exertions. The confidence of the petitioners, it might be added, has never since been effectually revived; nor has the same measure been again resorted to with equal alacrity, or similar anticipations of success.

About the period when addresses were presented to Parliament for the abolition of the *Slave-Trade*, the Protestant Dissenters renewed their application for relief from the *Corporation and Test Acts*. In the object of both these applications there were undoubtedly some circumstances of congeniality; and the zeal which was manifested in each might possibly borrow something from its kindred to the other. The latter, indeed, must be considered as the effort of a small part of the community contending for civil and religious privileges on equal terms with the rest; the former, as the unsought exertion of a promiscuous public in behalf of the natural rights of justice and

humanity. But they had a common origin in the spirit of the times; and although danger to religious establishments on the one hand, and to commercial prosperity on the other, were the avowed apprehensions which occasioned their failure; yet there appeared reason to believe that the fear of innovation, at a time of considerable peril to the governing powers of Europe, was a more efficient and satisfactory cause. The ill success of these exertions for reformation was, nevertheless, a subject of more than partial or temporary regret.—In aid of the *repeal* of the Corporation and Test Acts, the inhabitants of Manchester, in conjunction with the citizens of the most considerable towns in the kingdom, presented a petition to parliament, urging in moderate but decisive terms the expediency of such a measure. In this petition Dr. Percival cordially joined; and when, on the failure of the first efforts with the legislature, it was deemed adviseable to offer another address of the like nature, at a subsequent period, his exertions were not wanting to render it popular within the circle to which his influence extended. When this effort also proved fruitless, more violent measures were meditated in some parts. But the zeal which prompted such designs

was neither felt nor approved by the Subject of this narrative. In conformity with the rest of the respectable body to which he was attached, and with many of the clergy and laity of the Establishment, he deemed the Test-Acts useless and impolitic as restrictions, and highly invidious, as a mark of separation among declared protestants. Conceiving them to be at the same time inconsistent with the free spirit of our Constitution, and grievous to those against whom they are directed, he was anxious to promote the first judicious efforts that were made for their removal. But when the legislature firmly resisted, he thought it the wiser part to pause in silent acquiescence; with the hope, perhaps, that in a more enlightened or tranquil period, the claims which were denied as a requisition, might be granted as a *boon*.

Besides the topics above stated, which come under discussion in the following Correspondence, there are others not inferior in importance, which do not, however, require to be anticipated or explained. Two circumstances only occur to be noticed; the publication of a volume of *Moral and Literary Dissertations*, in the year 1788; and of *An Enquiry into the Principles and Limits of Taxation, as a Branch of Moral and Political Philosophy*, which was inserted

in the third volume of the "Memoirs" of the Literary Society of Manchester. The former of these works, from the various dissertations which it contains, is, perhaps, better adapted to general perusal, than any of Dr. Percival's writings. In beauty of composition, and felicity of illustration, it has been esteemed among the happiest productions of his pen; while it affords a proof that his taste for polite literature was not unprofitably exercised in the hours of his studious leisure.* The Essay on *Taxation*, as the title announces, is an abstract disquisition, in which the right of imposing taxes and the obligation of contributing to them are considered in their primary relation to individuals, and the public state. The principles adopted, and the conclusions derived from them, are arranged in a simple and luminous order, without deviation into collateral enquiries; and the brevity of the disquisition, is recompensed

* This volume, which the author inscribed to his highly-esteemed friend, the Bishop of Llandaff, consists, for the most part, of the *pieces* which have already been noticed, as communications to the Manchester Society. The additional Dissertations are, "*On the Influence of Habit and Association; On Inconsistency of Expectation in Literary Pursuits; On a Taste for the Beauties of Nature; On a Taste for the Fine Arts; On the Alliance of History with Poetry.*"

by *Notes and Illustrations*. The author's admiration of the British form of government is inevitably displayed on various occasions. But as the work is written with freedom and spirit, it may afford an illustration of the author's general principles; and being approved by individuals of different parties, may testify his singular moderation, at a period when the factious efforts to undermine the authority of legitimate government, had raised a clamour against abstract political treatises of every kind. Alluding to this tract, in his private correspondence, the author declares, "being perfectly satisfied with our present government, and grateful for the blessings enjoyed under it, I should be unwilling to offer any observations to the public, which might even by malice be construed to favour faction or discontent; but at the same time I am persuaded, that nothing tends more powerfully to establish just authority, than the calm investigation of the principles on which it is founded."

MISCELLANEOUS LITERARY

CORRESPONDENCE.

No. I.

From Dr. PERCIVAL to Dr. LETTSOM.

“ Manchester, June 13, 1783.

“ **I** Received the obliging present of your publication* a few days ago, and have directed my first leisure moments to the perusal of your very animating and interesting account of Dr. Fothergill. The portrait you have drawn exhibits a most pleasing, yet exact, likeness of our venerable and amiable friend; and I wish the contemplation of it may lead many to emulate the excellent original. But having undertaken the office of biographer, not that of the

* “ The Works of John Fothergill, M. D. by John Coakley
“ Lettsom;” to which is prefixed, a Biographical Narrative.

encomiast, you have touched with delicate censure some of the failings to which this great man was incident, and from which, indeed, it is not the lot of humanity to be exempt. In the 147th page, you particularly mention ‘his promptitude in adopting opinions, and tenacious retention of them.’ I know that Dr. Fothergill has been condemned by his brethren of the faculty on this account, but I think without sufficient candour or indulgence. There was no professional or intellectual talent on which he valued himself so highly, as his skill in the discrimination of diseases. This skill he certainly possessed in a very eminent degree, and as it is the result of extensive experience, and accurate observation, aided by a quick apprehension and enlarged understanding, it gradually becomes an almost instantaneous or intuitive operation of the judgment, which claims implicit assent to all its decisions. Such being the constitution of the human mind, we cannot be surprized at the promptness of Dr. Fothergill in forming his opinions, or that he reposed a confidence in them not always proportioned to the degree of their probability. We may add too, that the multiplicity and rapid succession of his practice admitting not of doubt or hesitation, was compelled to act upon the evidence which each

case presented at the first view; and what necessity enforced, habit rendered familiar, and success satisfactory.

“ The letter in which you have given me an extract, in the 72d page, was occasioned by a conversation I had with the Doctor at my house on the subject of *Friendship*. He had adopted the opinion of Soame Jenyns, that it is a fictitious virtue, neither authorised nor encouraged by the Christian dispensation. To such a doctrine, however ingeniously supported by our friend, I could not be persuaded to accede; and I urged to him, that though benevolence is the great law of the Gospel, it must have its commencement in the more refined and partial charities. The man who has not felt the appropriated regard of a son, a brother, a husband, or a *friend*, cannot have a heart capable of being expanded with philanthropy. Even piety itself originates in the filial relation; and we learn to transfer to the Deity that gratitude and veneration with which the tender offices and wisdom of our parents first inspired us. It is not the object of Christianity to overturn, but to regulate the œconomy of the human mind; and if benevolence must have its foundation in private affection, the divine law which directs the former, necessarily inculcates the latter.”

No. II.*

From Miss H. MORE to Dr. PERCIVAL.

“ Bristol, Aug. 22, 1784.

“ I Desire you to accept of my best thanks for the honour and pleasure you have done me, in thinking me worthy to receive from your hands your most excellent *Socratic Discourse*. I do not know whether I am most pleased with the design, or the execution of it. For by making your well-chosen little stories

* The letters of Dr. Percival, which gave occasion to this and the following communications, have not been preserved; the above communications, however, are inserted in this place, as they contain criticisms on several of Dr. Percival's compositions, which are valuable, as they proceed from persons of distinguished talents and taste.

The Editor takes this opportunity to observe, that he has on several occasions introduced into the present collection the communications of Dr. Percival's literary correspondents, even when not accompanied by the replies to which they probably gave rise; but he has been careful to insert those only which contribute to reflect light on the sentiments, the conduct, or the writings, of the Subject of his narrative; agreeably to the acknowledged maxim, that the character of an individual is most perfectly illustrated by a view of the estimation which he has borne among his cotemporaries.

The Editor begs leave at the same time to express his sense of the obliging indulgence of those individuals who have enabled him to enrich these pages with their literary epistles.

all subservient to your general plan, and each contributing to illustrate some important truth; they all appear in a striking light, and afford new pleasure from being considered in new points of view. Your concluding *Essay, on a Taste for the Beauties of Nature*, proves sufficiently that the author observes the Horatian maxim of possessing what he recommends to others. It is, indeed, written in the true spirit of good taste; and perhaps I do not like it the worse, because I fancy I discover a coincidence with my own private sentiments, particularly in the relation between moral and natural beauty. For I am strongly inclined to think, that there is a *natural* love of virtue in every mind which contains the genuine principles of good taste. I hope, Sir, you will consent that your useful labours may become more generally useful, by presenting the public* with a work which I have no doubt will meet with a reception equal to its merit;—*c'est tout dire.*”

* The Tract alluded to was at that time printed only for the author's distribution, but was afterwards *published*.

No. III.

From Dr. AIKIN to the same.

“ Warrington, 1784.

“ WHEN I had the pleasure of seeing you last at Warrington, the discourse in which we were engaged made me entirely forget the acknowledgments I ought to have paid for your late very agreeable and elegant present.* There is no circumstance in the literary history of the present age more pleasing, than the attention which has been paid by writers of the greatest abilities and reputation to the instruction of young minds, by works formed on a much better plan for that purpose than the generality of those before extant. Your productions and example in this point have been of the greatest utility. I hope you will be animated by a consciousness of the good you are doing, to proceed in the same walk, and complete your well-conceived plans.

“ I have formerly taken the liberty to express to you my peculiar satisfaction in the design of *teaching*

* Moral Tales, Fables, and Reflections.

virtue by examples, and appealing to the *feelings* of youth as much as to their reason. I am also much gratified with the approbation you have manifested, of my attempt to unite the studies of Natural History and Poetry, by your elegant and judicious supplementary remarks on the same subject. I think you have done very right in taking Philosophy also into the alliance; in Poetry, as in every other kind of composition, I believe we cannot consistently stop short of Boileau's maxim, *Rien n'est beau que le vrai; le vrai seul est aimable*. I hope soon to make a small return for your kindness, by a work now ready for the press, to which your example has a good deal contributed. It is designed for the instruction and amusement of youth in particular, and will be entitled the *Calendar of Nature*. In this I go through each month in order, describing the state of the weather, the various appearances in nature, in the animal and vegetable kingdoms, the agricultural and other oeconomic employments of the season, &c. A good many poetical quotations are interspersed, to enliven the work, and inspire a taste for poetry. It will be but a short piece, and I wish to print it in such a size and form as to give it a share of pretty general reception.

“ I have been lately reading a most entertaining work, *Huet, de Rebus ad eum pertinentibus*, from which I cannot forbear copying a line or two of the character of Salmasius; as I think you will at once be struck with its applicableness to a very respectable acquaintance of ours. ‘ *Si quis certe animum ejus atque mores et scripta æstimare velit, arrogans fuisse videatur, contumax sibi præfidens; at in usu et consuetudine vitæ nihil placidius, nihil mitius; comis, etiam urbanus, et officii plenus.*’

“ Mr. — has much surprized me by a quotation he has sent me from *Warner on the Eyes*; in which he asserts, that all his patients in the jaundice saw yellow. I had perfectly agreed with you, from my own experience and enquiries, in considering this as a vulgar error; but such a modern and apparently respectable witness on the other side staggers me; and yet I still think the fact improbable in itself, and can scarcely conceive that nature would be so variable in such a circumstance, as that it should happen to all one person’s patients, and to none of another’s.”

No. IV.

*From Doctor PERCIVAL to T. B. PERCIVAL, at
St. John's College, Cambridge.*

“ MY DEAR SON, *Manchester, Feb. 10, 1785.*

“ I Approve very much of the Conversation Society you have established. Such institutions promote the spirit of study by the emulation which they excite; and whilst they heighten the zest for knowledge, they give accuracy and permanency to our acquirements. But I lament that you devote a part of Sunday to pursuits foreign to that day. Religion and Ethics, considered in an intellectual view, hold the first rank in dignity among the sciences; and to be defective in a systematic acquaintance with them is disgraceful to a scholar and a gentleman. But regarding them as the rule of life, and the foundation of all our future hopes, they have a pre-eminence beyond comparison over every other species of learning. With such sentiments, it has been my general practice, from early youth to the present period, to set apart Sundays to the most important of all studies; and I have experienced very beneficial effects from this regula-

tion. It has greatly diversified my studies, has often checked the fallies of levity, and strengthened all the good impressions of a virtuous and pious education. You know I am free from any superstitious veneration for times and seasons ; but every office requires some stated order in its performance. I do not mean to recommend the discussion of moral or theological topics at your meetings ; for such dissertations among young men are seldom subservient to any good. But I wish to suggest to you the propriety of assembling on some other day of the week, if you can easily prevail with your friends to comply with such a proposal.” * * * * *

No. V.

From the same to Doctor HARGARTH.

“ *Manchester, 1785.*

“ YOUR letter has been delayed in the post-office, or I should have written to you sooner. * * * I saw a letter from Mr. Howard, dated November 2d, from the Lazaretto, near Venice. He complains, that it is extremely cold, and very dirty ; but says,

he shall be released in two days. He very strongly laments the honours that are preparing for him in his native country; and I doubt not, with the utmost sincerity. But his concern appears to me to be founded on false principles of religious humility, and to spring from the Calvinistic doctrine of original sin, that human actions have too much of the alloy of guilt to be regarded as meritorious.—I have omitted to add, that Mr. Howard says, ‘ what ‘ would be most suitable and most agreeable to me, ‘ would be a tomb in the centre of one of your ‘ prisons,’ (the letter is written to Mr. Blackburn, the celebrated prison architect,) ‘ with a plain stone, ‘ having only my name inscribed upon it.’

“ You will very soon have a copy of the ‘Memoirs’ of our Literary Society.* The work is finished, but the printer is most dilatory in forcing the sheets, &c. I wish you would send us some communications; indeed, I am almost angry at your neglect of duty as an honorary member of the institution. Dr. Priestley informs me, that he is about to draw up another volume of his *Experiments*. But the sub-

* The two first volumes of the “ *Memoirs of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Manchester* ” were published in the present year.

scription, he says, for the expence of his Laboratory is dropping. Some of those on whom he most depended, have discontinued it, without assigning any reason, or giving any notice; which last circumstance has proved rather inconvenient to him. Could we not, by small annual contributions, raise a fund for the support of this excellent philosopher's pursuits? Two guineas per annum from twenty persons would, I think, suffice. Be so good as to consider of this proposal, and to inform me what number you think might accede to it in Chester."

No. VI.

From the Same to the Same.

" Manchester, 1785.

" ASSURED of the liberality of your mind, I intimated to you the plan I had in contemplation, relative to Dr. Priestley. That plan has since been changed for a better; and last night the following resolutions were proposed and carried in the Philosophical Society with the most cordial unanimity.

“ 1. The Literary and Philosophical Society of Manchester, taking into mature consideration the importance of those experiments and researches in which the Rev. Dr. Priestley is engaged, to the interest of the arts, of commerce, and of science; and desirous to offer a tribute of respect to so distinguished a member of their institution, unanimously resolve, that a sum not less than 50*l.* shall be remitted to him by their authority, and in their name, for the purpose of promoting and extending his philosophical pursuits.

“ 2. Resolved, that the subscription so liberally formed by several members of this Society for the purpose of carrying into effect the contribution above proposed, be received as a part of the fund of the Society appropriated to the use which has been specified; and that the deficiency of it be supplied, if necessary, out of the joint stock now in the treasurer's hands.

“ But no deficiency occurred, the subscription was instantly completed with a degree of zeal and generosity which reflects great honour on the members of our Institution.”

No. VII.

From the Same to the Same.

“ *Manchester, 1785.*

“ AGREEABLY to your request, I transmitted two guineas, with the sum voted by our Society to Dr. Priestley. In a letter from Dr. Priestley, which displays an excellent heart, he informs me that the deficiency in the annual subscription for the support of his Laboratory amounts to *forty-five* pounds. The whole, when duly paid, amounted to something more than a *hundred*. He has had two proposals of a pension from the king, made by those who, if he had approved of it, could have carried it into execution. But he declined them both, wishing to be independent. ‘With respect to myself,’ says he, ‘I am as rich as I wish to be. My sons will have employments, which I prefer to estates, under their uncles; so that I really think my lot the happiest in the world, as I can devote my whole time to useful and pleasing pursuits; and if one fail, I can fly to another.’ I have forwarded your letter of introduction, &c.”

No. VIII.

From Miss H. MORE to Dr. PERCIVAL.

“ Bristol, Aug. 8, 1785.

“ I Return you a thousand thanks for the ingenious little work which you did me the honour to send me.* As my ignorance of the charming science to which it relates, makes *my* good opinion of it of no value, I trusted it into the hands of my excellent friends, the late Duchess Dowager of Portland, and Mrs. Delany, and some other persons, whose elegant taste and exact knowledge of natural history made them worthy to possess it; and they were all thankful for the pleasure I had given them.

“ For my own part, Sir, however I may be pleased with the ingenuity of the performance, my passion for flowers is so great, that I dare not become a proselyte to your hypothesis; for what would become of me, if every time I gathered a bunch of pinks or roses, I had to accuse myself of making whole

* “ *Speculations concerning the Perceptive Powers of Vegetables;*” an Essay, read before the Literary and Philosophical Society of Manchester, and printed in the second volume of its *Memoirs*.

families of widows and orphans? In truth, the fancy is so pretty and poetical, that if I had not renounced such idle company as the Muses, I should be tempted to write the tragedy of Flora, with the *dramatis personæ* from the parterre, and the *Chorus* from the shrubbery. There is really something so tender and amiable in the conjecture, that it has caught hold of my imagination, and I am so little of a philosopher that a conjecture amuses me almost as much as a fact.

“ I take the liberty to offer to your acceptance a book, which I hope will have the good fortune to amuse you, from the singular circumstances of the author.”

No. IX.

*From Dr. PERCIVAL to the Right Rev.
the BISHOP of LANDAFF.*

“ *Manchester, Aug. 29, 1785.*

“ THE kindness to me and to my son, evinced by your Lordship’s obliging attention to the subject on which I consulted you, deserves my grateful acknowledgments. I shall wait for the further information

with which you indulgently promised to favour me, before I decide concerning the time of his removal from Cambridge. Since the receipt of your letter, I have been honoured with the present of your *Theological Tracts*; for which I beg leave to return my sincere thanks. I shall ever highly prize a work of such intrinsic merit; and by considering it as a memorial of your friendly regard, its value will be enhanced in my estimation. I am charmed with the candour, the liberality, and the spirit of catholicism, which your Lordship has avowed with such energy and freedom in your preface. The true Christian charity of a Bishop which you have there manifested, will promote the interests of the Church of England far more honourably and permanently than creeds, tests, or anathemas. You have proved yourself the generous minister of peace; and if others would follow your laudable example, by offering the olive branch instead of brandishing the sword, or throwing down the gauntlet, I hope and trust an end might be put to theological contention and hostility. A zeal for truth is doubtless of importance to the cause of religion and virtue; but it should be governed by wisdom, and tempered by meekness. Wisdom will guard us against the delusions of the imagination,

and teach us to appreciate the value of every doctrine by its proportional influence on our affections and our conduct; and meekness will restrain all acrimony, arrogance, and usurpation over the consciences of others. Vain and unjustifiable must appear the controversies that have enflamed the world, when measured by such standards.

“ I shall be happy to hear from your Lordship at your leisure; and have the honour to be, with very sincere respect and esteem, &c.”

No. X.

*From the Rev. WILLIAM ROBERTSON, D. D.
to Dr. PERCIVAL.*

“ *Buxton, Nov. 6, 1785.*

“ I Return you thanks for your obliging attention, in communicating to me the plan of your new Academy* at Manchester. I had so many opportunities of being acquainted with the abilities of the

* Academy for the Education of Protestant Dissenting Ministers and others; similar to the Institution at Warrington, which had recently been dissolved. The liberality of sentiment displayed by Dr. Robertson in the above letter, and in a former one, (see note page xxxix,) are so honourable to his memory, that this circum-

masters, and the proficiency of the students, in the Academy at Warrington, that I could not but think favourably of the Institution, and regret the dissolution of it. I hope it will now revive with the same liberal spirit at Manchester, and under another name pursue the same useful objects. I can see no interference of your scheme with the new plan of education, which is forming in the South. There is room for both; and if they shall be established on such principles as one may expect from the spirit of the age, I hope they may become seminaries of education, not for Dissenters only, but for persons of every denomination. If you shall be of opinion, that an academical degree may be of any benefit to any of the Masters in your new Institution, I need not say that any recommendation coming from you, or my good friend Mr. B——, will be received by me with the greatest attention. If your son be with you, I beg to be remembered to him. I shall be much disappointed, indeed, if from that young man you do not derive both much comfort and much honour.”

* * * * *

stance alone might render them deserving of publication. But they may serve also to manifest the zeal of Dr. Percival, in exciting among eminent persons an interest in the success of the new Academical Establishment.

No. XI.

From Dr. PERCIVAL to Dr. HAYGARTH.

“ Manchester, 1786.

“ I Most cordially rejoice that your very benevolent and judicious ‘ Inquiry ’ how to prevent the Small-Pox, has already excited, and is likely still more extensively to excite, the attention and approbation of the public; and I admire the steadiness and zeal with which you have prosecuted this plan. My testimonial in its favour can weigh only like a feather in the balance. But I shall feel a pride and a pleasure in contributing in any degree towards the accomplishment of your laudable views; and I shall reconsider your queries with attention. Towards the end of next month I shall be happy in an opportunity of conferring with you at Warrington on these and other interesting topics; and I have a project to lay before you for inducing the Empress of Russia to adopt the scheme of exterminating the small-pox in her dominions. This great woman, you know, not only possesses the spirit of enterprize, and the power to carry her councils into effect; but has manifested a particular knowledge,

and strong interest, in the subject of your 'Inquiry.' Now I wish you to prefix to the French edition of this work a dedication to her Imperial Majesty, stating, in the most forcible terms, the expediency and practicability of your scheme, and the honour and benefit that would redound to the Sovereign who accomplishes it. If you have no connections at St. Petersburg, I am persuaded that Dr. Rogerson, first physician to the Empress, who lately visited me, would enter cordially into your designs. Or the Princess Dachkow, who is well acquainted with Mr. ———, might be desired to present the book in due form.

“ The paragraph in your letter respecting your health, gives me much concern; and I regret that you have not been more explicit. My kind physician, separate from the claims of friendship, has a just right to my best services.

“ I have just been interrupted by a gentleman coming to invite me to meet a stranger of distinction from Russia, who is to dine with him to-morrow. Be assured that I shall not neglect the opportunity of conferring with him about your Inquiry. Did I ever mention to you an agreeable proof which I received early this summer, of the freedom of the French press?

M. Boulard, an advocate of the first eminence at Paris, has presented to me the translation of my ‘Socratic Discourse on Truth and Faithfulness,’ without the least softening of any of the passages concerning civil and religious liberty ; yet it is printed with the *approbation et privilege du Roi.*” * * * * *

No. XII.

From JAMES BEATTIE, LL.D. to Dr. PERCIVAL.

“ *Aberdeen, Dec. 24, 1786.*

“ A Tedious indisposition which came on last autumn, and of which I have not yet got the better, has made me delay longer than I wished, to acknowledge the receipt of your very kind and entertaining letter of the 18th of October. Permit me now, Sir, to return my best thanks for it, and to tell you that nothing could have gratified me more than the favourable opinion which you and the other members of your Literary and Philosophical Society have been pleased to form of my little book on the Evidences of

our Religion. It has met with a better reception than I could have expected from the laity ; and some very distinguished characters among the clergy have honoured it with their approbation. I had long intended to attempt something in this way ; and I believe it is not less than fifteen years since it was begun. The occasion of publishing it is mentioned in the preface.

“ I am happy to hear your Society continue their literary pursuits with so much zeal and success ; my best wishes will ever attend them. - The Transactions they lately published is, I am told, a very valuable collection. I hope to see it in a few weeks. But it is long before even the best works find their way into this remote corner. I shall be proud to see any thing of mine in the next publication ; and shall probably, as soon as I have health and leisure, trouble the Society with some petty Essay of one sort or other.

“ Your account of Dr. Franklin is very interesting. The powers of body and mind which that extraordinary man has possessed through so long a life, are indeed wonderful. I once had the honour to dine with him at Islington, in the year 1771, if I mistake not, and then looked up to him with that veneration which became me. The abilities he has

displayed since that time give wonderful elevation to his character.

“ I sincerely wish Dr. Priestley success in his laudable endeavours to convert the Jews. The time will come, no doubt, when the eyes of that people shall be opened ; but their disinclination to the company and to the writings of Christians is such, as seems to intimate that it is still very remote. Christians, however, ought to do their best, and to hope for the best.”

[The letter respecting the habits and pursuits of Dr. Franklin, to which Dr. Beattie refers in the above communication, has unfortunately been destroyed.—The following letter, from that eminent philosopher, during his residence in France, may be deemed curious, both on account of the matter which it contains, and as it was written in the 79th of his age, evincing the same vein of humour which characterised him through life.]

From Dr. FRANKLIN to Dr. PERCIVAL.

“ Passy, near Paris, July 17, 1784.

“ I Received yesterday your kind letter of May the 11th, with the most agreeable present of your new book.* I read it all before I slept ; which is a proof of the good effect your happy manner has of drawing your readers on, by mixing little anecdotes and historical facts with your Instructions. Be pleased to accept my thankful acknowledgments for the pleasure it has afforded me. It is astonishing that the murderous practice of duelling, which you so justly condemn, should continue so long in vogue. Formerly, when duels were used to determine law-suits, from an opinion that Providence would in every instance favour truth and right with victory, they were more excusable. At present they decide nothing. A man says something, which another tells him is a lie. They fight ; but whichever is killed, the point in dispute remains unsettled. To this purpose they have a pleasant story here.—A gentleman in a coffee-house

* ‘ *A Father’s Instructions.*’

desired another to sit further from him.—Why so? Because, Sir, you smell offensively.—That is an affront, and you must fight me.—I will fight you, if you insist upon it; but I do not see how that will mend the matter; for if you kill me, I shall smell too; and if I kill you, you will smell if possible worse than you do at present.—How can such miserable sinners as we are entertain so much pride, as to conceive that every offence against our imagined honour merits death! These petty princes, in their own opinion, would call that sovereign a tyrant, who should put one of them to death for a little uncivil language, though pointed at his sacred person: yet every one of them makes himself judge in his own cause, condemns the offender without a jury, and undertakes himself to be the executioner.

“ Our friend Mr. V.—— may, perhaps, communicate to you some conjectures of mine relating to the cold of last winter, which I sent him in return for the Observations on Cold, of Professor Wilson. If he should, and you think them worthy so much notice, you may shew them to your Philosophical Society, to which I wish all imaginable success: their rules seem to me excellent. With sincere and great esteem, I have the honour to be, &c.”

No. XIII.

*From Dr. PERCIVAL to * * *.*

“ Manchester, Feb. 4, 1787.

“ I AM happy to avail myself of this opportunity of sending to your Lordship two discourses, delivered on the establishment, and at the commencement, of the Manchester Academy. The principles on which this Institution is founded, will, I trust, not only meet with your candid indulgence, but be honoured with your approbation; for I am persuaded you are a sincere and zealous friend to the cause of civil and religious liberty, and that you possess in an eminent degree that spirit of catholicism, which forms an important branch of Christian charity, and which promotes the interests of the Church of England under its present excellent governors, far more powerfully than creeds, tests, or anathemas.

“ The Roman Catholics, I am informed, have a design to purchase the building of the late Academy of Warrington, for the purpose of establishing a great seminary of education for their youth. Dr. Berrington, a priest distinguished for learning and liberality of

sentiment, is the planner of this scheme; and I believe it is supported by many persons of high rank among the Papists. I cordially wish success to so laudable an undertaking. For it is a disgrace to this country, and injurious to some of its best interests, that the Catholics should be compelled to seek for tuition abroad. When instructed in this enlightened land, they may retain the nominal distinction of their church, but will assuredly lose the spirit of it. Indeed, reformation is now making rapid advances in almost every country of Europe; and I have lately received a pleasing proof of the liberty of the press in France, and that works very adverse to the principles of Popery may have the *approbation et privilege du Roi*. An advocate of the first rank at Paris has sent me his translation of the *Socratic Discourse*, which I published about three years ago. It is rendered into French without the suppression of one observation, or the softening of one expression; except the insertion of an occasional note, to intimate that ‘such an error is to be excused, as the author ‘is a Protestant.’

“By a letter I lately received from Dr. Beattie, I learn that his Treatise on the Evidences of Christianity has met with a very favourable reception.

both from the laity and clergy. It is, indeed, a valuable work. I wish Dr. Beattie would employ his pen in the defence of some doctrines of natural religion, particularly the spirituality and immortality of the soul, which have been zealously assailed even by believers in revelation.

“ The bottom of the page reminds me of the unreasonable length of this letter ; but I trust your Lordship will excuse it, and that you will believe me with every sentiment of respect and esteem, &c.”

No. XIV.

From Dr. PERCIVAL to Dr. HATGARTH.

“ *Manchester, 1787.*

“ THE return of ——— affords me an opportunity of sending a small packet to you. At the same time permit me to thank you for your last kind, though very short, letter, and for the account of the meteors, which accompanied it. This I communicated to our Society, but do not hear that any of the members offered any observations to illustrate, or had seen, the phenomenon. The proposals for Mr. Nicholson's History of Electricity were sent me by

Lord George Cavendish, with a request that I would interest my friends in the execution of the work, by procuring from them such medical or philosophical information as may contribute to it. M. Saussure's relation of his ascent to the top of Mont Blanc, will entertain you. When you return it, (which I wish to be soon, because it will be read at our Society,) be so good as to furnish me with *specimen alterum Ph. Lond.* The copy Sir George Baker promised to send me, I presume has been lost on the road. Are you making any exertions at Chester to suppress the Slave Trade? Mr. Wilberforce is to bring forward a Bill in Parliament respecting it. You formerly recommended to me Neckar on the Finances of France; and I now recommend to you the Life of M. Turgot, by the Marquis de Condorcet. You will find that great minister had in contemplation the abolition of the horrid traffic in the human species. Virginia, New-York, and Carolina, have now united in measures to put an end to it.

Mr. Howard* is preparing a bill to be brought into Parliament this session, to restrain the use of

* Dr. Percival maintained a friendship and occasional correspondence with this distinguished philanthropist, till the period of his death.

liquors in prisons. He says jocularly to his friends, that had a statue been erected to him, (as was designed) this bill would have occasioned its demolition, &c."

No. XV.

From the Same to the Same.

" Manchester, 1787.

" I NEED not express to my dear Friend my cordial sympathy with him on the present melancholy occasion. With the feelings of a father, who has experienced pangs like your's, I feel for you; and I may comfort you by the assurance that the continued view of irremediable suffering in those we love, exceeds the bitterness of death itself; and that when this overwhelming trial is past, the consolations of religion elevate a virtuous mind far above the dejection of sorrow. Attempt not, through an austere and mistaken piety, to suppress the emotions of your grief. Indulge your tears; JESUS wept for Lazarus; and resignation implies in its essence a very high degree of sensibility. But it implies also that

we direct our attention from the stroke of distress to the Sovereign Hand that hath inflicted it; and that we sorrow, with hope in his goodness, and confidence in the wisdom and equity of all his dispensations.

“ Permit me to recommend to you the perusal of Harris’s Dialogue on Happiness, particularly the latter part of it.” * * *

No. XVI.

From the Same to the Same.

“ *Manchester, 1787.*

“ YOUR very friendly anxiety about my health merits my most grateful acknowledgments; and I am concerned that your kind enquiries have not been sooner answered. The truth is, it is unpleasant to recite complaints - - - - -. Even under the pressure of sickness, I have so many consolations, as ought to repress every murmuring thought; and with the utmost affection for my friends, I can look forward to a separation from them without fear or anxiety. You express an apprehension that study or literary composition may be injurious to me. I have not much leisure for either; and when I engage in them,

they afford me pleasure without pain or alloy. The love of fame has long since ceased to be a source of solicitude to me, and you have given me an obliging proof that you feel more for my reputation than I do myself. Accept of my best thanks for the kind interest you take in the new edition of my volumes, and for the trouble you are at in re-perusing them. This is what I have not yet done, and probably may not do. Your corrections will therefore be peculiarly acceptable and valuable to me. I had a letter from *** a few days ago. His malady, I fear, will continue to resist the power of medicine. How much is it to be regretted, that the public should lose the active services of a man so eminently qualified to promote the cause of learning, and of civil and religious liberty.”

No. XVII.

*From Dr. PERCIVAL to Mr. ***.*

“ *Manchester, 1787.*

“ I Ought to have returned my acknowledgments sooner for your very friendly letter, and your obliging readiness to gratify my wishes by the loan of the

Institutes of your Society.* This work is to me highly curious and valuable, and has heightened the esteem which I always entertained for your religious sect. I have often thought that the principles and manners of the Quakers afford them advantages over others in respect to the duration of life. The diligence, cleanliness, sobriety, and composure of mind, by which you are characterized as a body of men, may reasonably be supposed to contribute to health and longevity. And as there are no persons among you in want, and few immoderately rich, this comparatively equal distribution of property must lessen the sources of disease, and furnish the individuals under its pressure with the necessary means of relief. These considerations led me many years ago to obtain an estimate of the proportion of deaths amongst the Quakers in Manchester; and I applied at that time to my friend Dr. Fothergill, for information concerning the members of your Society in other places. He kindly undertook to gratify me, but never accomplished his promise. I wish you would consider the subject, and pursue this curious enquiry. It might do honour to your sect, and prove an incitement to the practice of those virtues for which it is

* Society of the people called Quakers.

distinguished. But perhaps it would be found that the want of vivacity in your people, and the sedentary lives of your females, are causes which shorten the period of existence, and counterbalance the peculiar advantages you enjoy. In 1775, the deaths among the Quakers in Manchester were in the proportion of *one to twenty-four*; amongst the inhabitants at large, they were as *one to twenty-eight*. But it should be noticed, that the former had no new accessions to their number; whereas settlers in the prime of life annually pour into Manchester.

“ You will lament with me the failure of the late application to Parliament for the repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts. Is there not reason to apprehend, from the conduct of our governors on this occasion, that we are indebted for the religious liberty we enjoy, more to the spirit of the times, than to dereliction in them of unjust domination? I wish your Society had united with their dissenting brethren in so equitable a petition, as it might have added energy to its operation. For however you may stand affected towards the enjoyment of public offices, the eligibility to them is one of your social rights; and a disqualification is not only an injury, but carries with it the stigma of a crime. We have the

highest authority, that of Lord Mansfield, for asserting that Protestant Non-conformists are not under the connivance, but the express protection, of the law; and that their modes of worship are in the fullest sense *established*. This was the sentiment, too, of the late Arthur Onslow, Speaker of the House of Commons; who observed, that the Church of England, as distinguished from Dissenting places of worship, is properly speaking, no more than an endowed Church, which the law not only protects, but endows with temporalities for its peculiar support and encouragement. In the late parliamentary debates on this interesting subject, I think sufficient stress was not laid on this point. It would have led to an essential distinction between the claims of Roman Catholics, and those of the Protestants, to trust and power: for the former are now, I believe, willing to acknowledge allegiance to the state. But their religion is subversive of the established religion of the country; that is, the Church of England, the Kirk of Scotland, the Quakers, and all orders of Protestant Dissenters, authorized by law; and the community has the same right which an individual enjoys, of possessing and providing for the security of its own religion. This provisional security, however, has its limita-

tions; and an Englishman ought to blush at the severity of the penal statutes against the Papists.

At a late meeting of the Committee of the Manchester Academy, I communicated to the gentlemen present, that part of your letter which relates to our Institution. We should be rejoiced to be honoured with the countenance and support of your Society; and I trust, the scruple to which you refer may easily be obviated. Admitting, as you do, the right of private judgment, you may lawfully and conscientiously contribute to the exercise of that right amongst any body of Christians, in a mode that you would not lawfully or conscientiously adopt yourselves. Besides, when a plan comprehends several objects, may not the aid or encouragement given be intentionally, though tacitly, appropriated to those which are consonant with your views? In this way you voluntarily pay taxes to government; notwithstanding you are apprized that a portion of their produce is devoted both to the purposes of war, and the support of an ecclesiastical establishment.” * * *

No. XVIII.

From Dr. PERCIVAL to the BISHOP of LANDAFF.

“ *Manchester, Sept. 18, 1787.*

*** “ I AM truly concerned that religious liberty has still so many opponents, both in our Universities, and in Parliament. How honourable is it to those who have not only the wisdom to distinguish, but the integrity and spirit to assert, the great and unalienable rights of men, of Protestants, and of Christians! I had lately a letter from the Chairman of the body of Dissenters in London, intimating a resolution to persevere in their application for a repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts. It would promote the success of this measure, were it generally understood that the Non-conformists, who have most wealth and influence, are not unfriendly to an established national Church, nor to Episcopacy. The Liturgic form of worship is by many, and in my opinion, with great justice, preferred to that in use amongst us.

“ I have not heard directly from Dr. Franklin, for more than ten months; but Dr. Rush, of Philadelphia, informs me that he is in good health and

spirits, and actively engaged in the important business of amending the federal government of America. The anarchy which has of late prevailed in that country, will convince the people of the necessity of investing the Congress with more power than has hitherto been delegated to it. Under the present circumstances of the Thirteen Provinces, the appointment of Dictator in the person of Dr. Franklin, might be a wise and salutary measure ; and would not, I apprehend, at his period of life, endanger the public liberty.

“ Our Literary Society will resume its meetings next month. I wish your Lordship’s health would permit you to honour us with further communications ; we have received many valuable papers, and another volume of ‘ Memoirs ’ will be ready for the press early in the spring.”

No. XIX.

From Dr. BEATTIE to Dr. PERCIVAL.

“ Aberdeen, Jan. 29, 1788.

“ SOME days ago, I received by the post a printed letter, containing resolutions of a Society

established at Manchester, for the purpose of effecting an abolition of the Slave Trade ; on which I was projecting to write to you, having observed your name in the list of the Committee, when the post of Saturday brought me your most agreeable letter of the 21st current. I assure you, Sir, that every word of your excellent letter, and of the printed resolutions, has my hearty concurrence ; and that if my poor services could be any use in the business, I should think you did me honour by commanding them. The slavery of the negroes, and every other species of slavery, I hold in utter abomination. The subject has been much in my thoughts ; and for these five and twenty years past I have, in the course of my annual lectures, endeavoured to expose it in its genuine colours, with all the arguments and all the little eloquence I am master of. I beg leave to acquaint you further, that about ten years ago I wrote a Treatise on the subject, (long before my friend Mr. Ramsay's very spirited performance appeared,) and that I have hitherto been kept from publishing it for no other reason but because I wish to collect all the information I could in regard to facts, well knowing that even to the best of causes any misrepresentation in this way is always injurious. I have picked up a

good deal of intelligence by conversing with people who had lived in the West-Indies and North-America. I have also looked into such abridgments or collections of colony laws relating to slaves, as have fallen in my way, and out of these, with the addition of my own remarks, I have made a little book, which I would willingly give to the public, if I thought it would be of any service. Will you pardon me, if I give you a short account of the plan of this little work? It has this title: ‘*Of the Lawfulness and Expediency of Slavery, particularly that of the Negroes* ;’ and as it was written at a time when our public affairs were going on rather unsuccessfully, I prefixed as a motto these words of Cicero: ‘*multa præterea commemorarem nefaria, si hoc uno sol quidquam vidisset indignius;—jure igitur plectimur.*’ De Off. ii. 8. I first consider the question relating to slavery in general, and what Aristotle and the civil law have said in its vindication. I then give a short account of the rise and progress, and present state, of the African Slave Trade, and of what I have reason to believe is the condition of the African slaves in the European, particularly the British, settlements. Then I examine *all* the pleas which I have ever heard or seen advanced in vindication of negro

slavery, and endeavour to prove, with some success I hope, that they are all frivolous and fallacious. The last plea, that ‘ negroes are not men, but beings of an inferior order,’ I consider very particularly : and I conclude with some hints respecting what I take to be the safest way of abolishing this infamous commerce; a part of the subject which I know I am not equal to, but on which, I flatter myself, I have not proposed any thing that would be attended with any harm, if it were to be adopted.

“ The Bishop of London, who is much interested in this matter, (as you will see by his sermons,) has often desired to see my little treatise; and I now begin to think in good earnest of transcribing and correcting it, for in its present state it is not fit to be seen. If I can get this accomplished, I will send it to him, and request his Lordship, if he approve it, to send it to you under franked covers; and if my friends desire it, I shall not be averse to its publication, though, perhaps, I may not be inclined to put my name to it; not because I am ashamed of it, or afraid of any consequences, but for another reason, which I may perhaps mention to you hereafter.

“ If this business is likely to come before the House of Commons soon, I shall consider the publishing of my little work as disrespectful to the legislature, and think of it no more ; for it would be in a very high degree presumptuous in me to suppose that I could give them any information. But if it be put off till next session, which I sincerely wish may not be the case, my remarks might perhaps be of use as a remonstrance, offered not to the legislature, but to the people in general. I shall take the first opportunity to talk on this subject with our magistrates as well as with the College. I have the honour to be, with the utmost esteem and regard, &c.”

No. XX.

From Dr. PERCIVAL to Dr. BEATTIE.

“ *Manchester, Feb. 1788.*

“ YOUR very friendly and interesting letter arrived yesterday ; and I feel it as a debt to justice and humanity, and consequently as a duty incumbent on me, to urge the publication of the excellent

and valuable work you have in view. The petitions which are now preparing in various counties, cities, and boroughs, will doubtless be presented during the present session of Parliament. But this ought to be no objection to the prosecution of your important undertaking; and I hope it will rather serve to forward the execution of it. I shall be glad to peruse your papers through the channel you mention. I have conversed with the Bishop of London on the subject of the Slave Trade, and know how much his Lordship reprobates it. In perusing the life of M. Turgot by the Marquis de Condorcet, I have been much pleased to find that it was one object of his administration to abolish the infamous traffic in the species. M. Neckar, in his Treatise on the Finances of France, also speaks of it with execration: but he observes, that the necessity of supporting Sovereign *power* has its peculiar laws, and the wealth of nations is one of the foundations of this power. ‘Yet would it,’ says he, ‘be a chimerical project, to propose a general compact, by which all European nations should agree to abandon the traffic of African Slaves?’ I should cordially rejoice to see so honourable a compact in favour of justice, humanity, and freedom. But I believe it may be proved

that the wealth of nations, and consequently the Sovereign power, sustains a real injury from this opprobrious branch of commerce. Liverpool sends out more vessels to the coast of Guinea than all the other ports of England; yet of thirty mercantile houses which have carried on nearly the whole of this trade since 1773, twelve have become bankrupts, and of the remainder, several are supposed to have been considerable losers. The truth is, that the African trade is a lottery, with a few great and tempting prizes, and many blanks. But I write in haste, and must conclude, with every sentiment of esteem and respect, &c.”

No. XXI.

From Dr. ROBERTSON to Dr. PERCIVAL.

“ *Coll. Edin. Feb. 19, 1788.*

“ NOTHING but a long scene of family distress, from which, thank God, I have now hopes of being delivered, could have prevented me from returning an answer directly to your kind letter. The subject of it is very interesting to every man who is animated

with the sentiments of humanity, or respects the precepts of religion. My opinion concerning the slavery of the negroes coincides in every point with your's; and I had occasion to express it in very strong terms, in a Sermon preached above thirty years ago, the first* work I published; and, if an author does not judge erroneously of his productions, as parents often do of their children, not the least meritorious. If you have not seen the sermon, I will send a copy of it to you. In this country, I imagine there is not one advocate for the Slave Trade; but whether addresses against it will be set a-going, I cannot say. With the operations of our Town Council I am not accustomed to intermeddle. Since I was connected with the University, it has been my endeavour, to fix the attention of literary men upon their proper business; and we have avoided addressing on different occasions, when addresses poured in from every corner of the kingdom. If an address could be of any benefit, there would be but one sentiment among us on the present subject; though I am unwilling to begin addressing upon the clearest and most proper of

* The Discourse above-mentioned is the only one which Dr. Robertson ever published.

any occasion, lest it should be a precedent for what may not be so desirable.*

“ I have been employed in what I think may be of greater utility. Mr. Wilberforce applied to me some time ago, requesting me to communicate to him any facts or ideas I thought might be of moment, in forming the plan of the speech which was to introduce the motion he intended to make, concerning the servitude of the negroes. As I had proposed to treat the subject at considerable length in that volume of the History of America, which the unfortunate termination of our conflict with the colonies obliged me to relinquish, I had considered the subject so carefully, that I was enabled to transmit to him a memorial of some length.

* A letter from Dr. Beattie to Dr. Percival, of a corresponding date, (Feb. 3, 1788,) states as follows: “ I have now the satisfaction
“ to inform you, that the Principal and Professors of Marischal
“ College and University of Aberdeen, did at their last meeting take
“ into consideration the intended application to the Legislature, on
“ the subject of Slavery, and were unanimously of opinion, that the
“ practice of enslaving the negroes of Africa is inhuman, impolitic,
“ and ought to be abolished. They wish, however, to have a little
“ time to think of the most proper way of giving public notice
“ of this their opinion; and, if possible, to do this in concert with
“ the other Universities of Scotland. Meanwhile, if you will favour
“ us with any advice or information on the subject, it will greatly
“ oblige the whole society,” &c.

“ Present my respectful compliments to the Gentlemen of your Committee.* Their object is most laudable, and I hope their beneficent efforts will be attended with success.”

No. XXII.

From Dr. PERCIVAL to Dr. ROBERTSON.

“ *Manchester, March 2, 1788.*

“ I am sincerely concerned to hear that you have suffered under a long scene of family distress; and I lament that you have not indulged me with the friendly communication of some particulars of it. In every event which concerns your happiness, I shall always feel myself cordially interested.

“ A feverish indisposition prevented me from attending the last meeting of the African Committee. I therefore requested the Chairman would deliver your

* *African Committee*, held at Manchester, for the purpose of framing a petition to Parliament for the abolition of the Slave-Trade, and of encouraging in other parts a similar disposition to address the Legislature.

message, and read to the gentlemen such parts of your letter, as relate to the objects of our association. In consequence of this, the enclosed paper was delivered to me by the Secretary, on Friday evening, to be transmittted to you. I hope you will comply with the request* it indirectly conveys. For as the legality of the traffic in the species, and the practice of negro slavery, are to be decided by the principles of natural equity, and by the precepts and the spirit of the Gospel, the avowed condemnation of both, by one so peculiarly well qualified to judge of their nature and extent, must have great authority with the public.

“ I earnestly wish too, that you could be prevailed upon to publish the facts and observations relative to negro servitude, collected for the continuation of your History of America. Such a work would be highly seasonable at this time, and might powerfully contribute to promote the success of the efforts which are now making, in favour of the injured and oppressed Africans.—The Sermon, mentioned in your last letter, I am impatient to see; and you will much oblige me by sending it as soon as you can with convenience.

* The Committee intimated a desire, that Dr. Robertson would republish and extensively circulate the Sermon and other tracts, mentioned in the preceding letter.

Dr. Priestley has favoured me with his Discourse on the present occasion, and I received one published by Mr. ****, the poet, at the same time. Reading them in succession, I was struck and amazed with their difference. The composition of the former is careless to an extreme, in point of style and language; but with respect to matter, is judicious and full of information; the work of the latter is polished and brilliant inanity. Dr. Perchard's Sermon, delivered before the University of Cambridge, I am informed, does great honour both to the author and to the cause which he has espoused.” * * * * *

No. XXIII.

From Dr. ROBERTSON to Dr. PERCIVAL.

“ College, Edinburgh, March 6, 1788.

“ I HAVE this moment had the pleasure of your letter of the 2d instant, and that I may not be too late for the waggon, I must write to you only a few lines.—Your Committee have set too high a value upon the sermon I mentioned. The consideration of

slavery is confined to one head of a discourse, which extends to several other subjects. Agreeably to my promise, I send two copies of it; one for yourself, and the other I request you to present with my best compliments to Mr. ***. I do not apprehend it to be of much consequence to re-publish the sermon; and, as I have communicated to Mr. Wilberforce any facts or hints concerning the Slave-Trade which I thought of importance, it would be improper for me to publish them in the manner which is requested. I am, in haste, &c."

No. XXIV.]

From Dr. PERCIVAL to Dr. HARGARTH.

" Manchester, 1788.

" I THOUGHT you had been long since apprized that your paper concerning the Glory was unanimously ballotted for insertion in the third volume of the Memoirs of our Society.—You have not hitherto favoured me with your objections to my Essay on

Taxation.* Pray state them fully and freely. Your animadversions will always merit from me not only a candid but a very partial attention. If our ideas differ concerning the nature of government, I am sure we shall particularly agree in our conduct as subjects. I feel an abhorrence of faction, a reverence for our Constitution, and gratitude for the civil and religious privileges we enjoy. But I conceive that power is always disposed to enlarge its boundaries, and that it should be watched with temperate but sedulous attention.† What Voltaire says of the Pope, is equally applicable to sovereignty; ‘it is at once proper to ‘kiss the toe, and to bind the hands, of the Sovereign ‘Pontiff.’

“I sent you a Poem, lately transmitted to me by our friend Aikin. It does credit to his poetical talents, but would have interested the heart more forcibly, had he introduced his reflections by a portrait

* See vol. ii. p. 291.

† The jealousy of power, and the dislike of faction, were almost equally conspicuous among the political sentiments of Dr. Percival. A mixed government of mutual controul, like that of England, he peculiarly admired; but in leaning to the popular as the fairer, though the weaker side, he adopted the sentiment of Sir William Jones, who declares his conviction, “*that power should always be “distrusted, in whatever hands it is placed.”*

of the Genius of a Republic. We are left without information respecting the character and attributes of this personage. Perhaps the following lines, from Thomson's *Castle of Indolence*, might supply the deficiency:

"When as the Knight had framed in Britain's land,
"A matchless form of glorious government,
"In which the sovereign laws alone command;
"Laws 'stablished by the public free consent,
"Whose majesty is to the sceptre lent:" &c. &c.

No. XXV.

From the Same to the Same.

"*Manchester*, 1788.

"I AM much pleased with your report of the state of the Blue-Coat Hospital at Chester. Have you read Dr. Parr's Discourses on Education, and on the Plans pursued in Charity-Schools? They are well worthy your attention; as you will readily believe any production must be which comes from the pen of the editor of 'Bellendenus.' Permit me also to recommend to you a little tract in the Repository, (a new periodical work, published every fortnight,) entitled, 'Considerations on the State of the Poor.'

“ As I am now assuming the office of literary purveyor to you, I will venture to advise your perusal of ‘ A General View of the African Slave-Trade; demonstrating its Injustice and Impolicy.’ This little piece is ascribed to Mr. ***, of Liverpool, and does great honour to his abilities. I confess I feel myself delighted with the general ardour which has displayed itself for the abolition of slavery, and the execrable trade in human misery. The citizens of Bristol, the inhabitants of Birmingham, Sheffield, and Manchester, (all apparently interested in their continuance,) have united in petitions to Parliament, expressive of their abhorrence of such injustice and inhumanity.

“ I rejoice that your abolition scheme* has been adopted with such success in New-England. Health and liberty are the two blessings which chiefly constitute the value of life; and to secure them in the highest practicable degree to mankind, is the earnest wish of genuine philanthropy; and should be the endeavour of every individual, when a proper occasion presents itself. It is an excellent maxim, and may always be opposed to supineness, “ No effort is in vain.”

* Scheme for exterminating the Small-Pox.

No. XXVI.

*From the Same to the Same.**“ Manchester, 1788.*

----- “ I AM solicitous to receive your strictures on my Taxation essay. It was hastily printed from my MS. If I have fallen into any material errors, I shall reprint the paper, with the necessary corrections, before the third volume of our Society's Memoirs is published. Let me hear from you very soon.

“ I promised the Rev. Mr. Burgefs,* of C. C. C. Oxford, for himself and for his learned friend, Mr. B——, chaplain to the Bishop of Salisbury, your two charity papers; but find myself unable to fulfil my word, having no copies of them. Pray furnish me with half a dozen of each. They have been greatly approved by many judicious persons. Mr. Burgefs has most laudably interested himself in the establishment of Sunday-Schools. He has favoured me with several admirable tracts for the promotion of these plans.

* Now Bishop of St. David's.

“ But what do you think of the following passage from the advertisement to a pamphlet, entitled, ‘ The Child’s first Lessons in Religion,’ which I received a few days ago:—‘ Doctrines, therefore, which cannot be made comprehensible to the utmost perfection of human reason, can never be so well taught as in the most docile state of the mind, before it has acquired the presumption of rejecting whatever it cannot comprehend.’ What better plea would a Roman Catholic require for ingrafting the doctrine of transubstantiation in the mind of his pupil? Can there be a more effectual mode than this devised for creating scepticism amongst men, when they come to think and reason? For when supposed errors are intimately combined with truth, the discrimination between them is often so difficult, that both are rejected together. The infidelity of Voltaire, and of many others, clearly arose from their zeal to emancipate themselves from ‘ all the nurse, and all the ‘ priest had taught.’——It is related of Augustus, Elector of Saxony, that at the age of eighteen he enquired of his confessor whether the real presence was assuredly a doctrine of Christianity? “ Most assuredly,” said the priest. “ Then,” said the Elector, ‘ it is impossible for me to be a Christian.’ ”

“ But I am deviating from the purpose of this letter, which is to remind you of the long one I wrote to you some time ago, and to request an immediate answer. I had a friendly letter from the Bishop of Landaff this morning. He has purchased an estate on the banks of Windermere, and is now directing plantations, improvements, &c.”

No. XXVII.*

From the Same, to the Rev. Archdeacon PALEY.

“ *Manchester, June 20, 1788.*

“ WHAT apology shall I offer for the liberty I am now presuming to take with you? The very high respect which I entertain for your talents and character, operates upon me at once as an incitement and restraint; and whilst I am solicitous to avail myself

* The following letter, although it was written on a private and personal occasion, has appeared to me, on two accounts, worthy of insertion in the present collection, the purpose of which is to display the genuine views and conduct of the writer; first, because it discloses the sentiments which he uniformly professed on the subject of religious establishments; and secondly, as it manifests the candour and liberality of his conduct on the occasion of his son's embracing the profession of the Church, in preference to his original destination.

of your counsel and assistance, I am diffident in requesting them, from a consciousness of having no claim to be honoured with either. But the occasion requires a sacrifice of feeling to judgment; and I shall trust to your goodness to excuse, if peculiar reasons do not justify, my present application to you.

“My oldest son, whom I intended for the profession of physic, by his residence at St. John’s College, and connections in Cambridge, has had his views changed, and is now strongly inclined to go into the Church. But previous to his final decision, he wishes to settle his mind on several important topics comprehended in the Articles of Faith. The chapter on Religious Establishments, in your excellent System of Moral and Political Philosophy, has had great weight with him; and he has this morning expressed to me an earnest desire to have the benefit of your personal instructions, on points so interesting to his future peace, prosperity, and usefulness. Is it possible for him to enjoy this singular privilege, for the space of a few weeks? I shall cordially acquiesce in any terms that you may prescribe, and with a grateful sense of obligation to you.

“I am a Dissenter; but actuated by the same spirit of catholicism which you possess. An establish-

ment I approve; the Church of England, in many respects, I honour; and should think it my duty to enter instantly into her communion, were the plan which you have proposed in your tenth chapter carried into execution.” * * *

No. XXVIII.

From the Rev. Archdeacon PALER to Dr. PERCIVAL.

“ *Carlisle, June 25, 1788.*

“ I DESIRE you to accept my thanks for the many obliging expressions of respect which your letter contains. If the state of my engagements had allowed me to spare a few weeks to a personal conference with your son upon any subject of doubt which he should chance to propose, it would have been a pleasure to me to have complied with your wishes, from a sense both of private obligation and of public esteem. As my time is at present very little in my own power, and my being at home very uncertain, I know not how I can contribute to your son’s satisfaction in any better way than by sending you a few additional

explanatory observations upon what I have written in my chapter entitled, ‘Of Subscription.’

“ 1st. If any person understand and believe all the several propositions in the thirty-nine Articles, and in the Liturgy and Homilies, which they recognize, there can be no place for doubt.

“ 2d. If a person think that every such proposition is probable, or as probable as the contrary or any other supposition on the subject, there can be no just cause of scruple.

3d. If a person, after using due enquiry, understand some of the propositions in the thirty-nine Articles, but not all, and assent to those propositions which he does understand, I think he may safely subscribe.

“ 4th. If a person think any part of the discipline government, rites, or worship of the Church of England to be *forbidden*, he certainly ought not to subscribe; but certain parts of these being not commanded, or not the best possible, or not good and useful, or not reasonable, (for many things may be absurd, and yet very innocent,) is not, in my opinion, a sufficient ground of objection.

“ 5th. If there be certain particular propositions in the Articles which he disbelieves, although he assent

to the main part of them, as well as to the lawfulness of the established government and worship of the Church, then arises the case in which the principal difficulty consists. And as to this case, I find no reason, upon much re-consideration, to question the principle I have laid down, viz. ‘ that if the intention and
‘ view of the legislature which imposed subscription,
‘ be satisfied, it is enough.’ But here comes a doubt, whether we can be permitted to go out of the terms of subscription, that is to say, the words of the statute, to collect the intention of the legislature or not. If we look to the terms of the subscription, they seem to require a positive assent to each and every proposition contained in the Articles, so as that believing any one such proposition to be untrue, is inconsistent with subscription. If we may be allowed to judge of the design and object of the legislature from the nature of the case, and the ordinary maxims of human conduct, it appears likely that they meant to fence out such sects and characters as were hostile and dangerous to the new establishment, viz. Popery, and the tenets of the Continental Anabaptists; rather than expect, what they must have known to be impracticable, the exact agreement of so many minds in such a great number of controverted propositions.

“ Now, concerning this doubt, viz. whether we may or may not go out of the terms of the statute to collect the design of the legislature, (which question I think involves the whole difficulty,) I can only say that a court of justice, in interpreting written laws, certainly could not, and ought not; for any such liberty would give to courts of justice the power of making laws; but I do not see that any danger or insecurity will be introduced by allowing this liberty to private persons. I mean, that private persons acting under the direction of a law may be said to do their duty, if they act up to what they believe to be the design of the legislature in making the law; whether their opinion of that design be founded upon the terms of the statute alone, or upon the nature of the subject and the actual probability.

“ If I had the pleasure of your son's presence, I know not whether I ought to say any thing more. It is the office of an adviser in such cases to suggest general principles. The application of these principles to each person's case must be made by the person himself, who alone knows the state of his own thoughts. I have only to add, that Burnet's seems a fair explication of the sense of the Articles.”

No. XXIX.

From Dr. PERCIVAL to Dr. PRIESTLEY.

“ *Manchester, Sept. 27, 1788.*

“ - - - IS success likely to attend the proposed application to Parliament for the repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts? I fear not. I am delighted with the advancement of M. Neckar to the administration of the finances of France. This great minister may have it now in his power to realize the project he has suggested, of a Compact amongst the maritime states of Europe for the Abolition of the Slave Trade. My friend, Dr. Frossard, the Protestant clergyman at Lyons, is patronized by him in a work he is about to publish, on the injustice and the impolicy of the traffic. I have sent to him and to M. Neckar most of the tracts on this subject which have appeared in England; and Madame Neckar informs me that she has translated and dispersed many of them through France.”

No. XXX.

From the BISHOP of LANDAFF to Dr. PERCIVAL.

“ Ambleside, Oct. 22, 1788. ”

“ YOUR obliging favour followed me to this place, where I have been about ten days, and where I mean to stay about six days longer, looking after an estate which I have purchased on the banks of Windermere. I have to thank you for your two pamphlets. That on the subject of Taxation appears to me closely written; though the principle which I have formed to myself of the magistrate’s power as to property, would make me question some parts of it. The principle is this; I consider property as very much the creature of civil society, and the supreme magistrate as authorised to apply the whole of the property of every individual for the preservation of the whole community. An infinity of questions of tedious discussion arise out of this principle, which respect the abuse of this power of the magistrate in pleading that necessity, in applying the

levies improperly, in raising them partially, &c. An individual has no right, I think, to resist a tax levied by the legislature; but when he thinks the legislature has betrayed its trust, he has a right to say, I will withdraw myself from being a member of that society. The subject is a very delicate one, and you have treated it with liberality, and yet with circumspection: but many persons will differ from you in some points.*

I shall be very happy in having an opportunity of being of service to your son by any advice I can give him; and I much approve your conduct in leaving him to fix upon a profession for himself. I fear no great liberality in church matters is to be expected at present. The efforts, however, of individuals are of use; and I am happy in having borne my testimony to the necessity of a reformation. My health is certainly not worse, and I think I may say it is better than before I left off all literary pursuits. I have turned my thoughts to planting, and the culti-

* The principle which Dr. Percival lays down, is the following:—"The *moral obligation* to pay taxes results from the "ALLEGIANCE due to the sovereign power, for the PROTECTION "which it affords to life, liberty, and property; and for the energy "which it exerts in the promotion of order, industry, virtue, and "happiness."

vation of an improveable estate; that I may thereby be induced to be much in the open air, which I flatter myself I shall find singularly beneficial to me."

No. XXXI.

From the Rev. T. BURGESS, C.C.C. Oxford, (now Bishop of St. David's) to Dr. PERCIVAL.

" March 1, 1789.

" I AM ashamed of not having written to you before, to thank you for the account of the Sunday Schools at Manchester, which you were so obliging as to send me at Salisbury. It gave me great pleasure to see the flourishing state of those schools; and it does infinite honour to those friends of the poor who have been instrumental to the support and success of such institutions. I have another subject of humanity to consult you about, in which I know you are interested. I have been employed some time in printing some ' Considerations on the Abolition of Slavery and the Slave Trade; ' in which I have occasion, amongst other things, to controvert the commonly

alleged incapacity of the negroes for intellectual improvement. Our friend, Mr. ——— shewed me the other day an account of that extraordinary exertion, I will not say of memory, but of abstract reasoning in the Maryland negro, which you sent him. As it is a fact which I had before seen in the newspapers, and I have made use of it, will you permit me to mention your authority for it, as received from Dr. Rush? As I hope to get my ‘Considerations’ out of the press next week, you will much oblige me by giving me a few lines by the return of post.”

No. XXXII.

From Dr. PERCIVAL to the Rev. T. BURGESS.

“Manchester, March 5, 1789.

“It affords me cordial pleasure, that your spirited and classical pen is now employed in the interesting cause of justice and humanity. I shall be impatient to see your ‘Considerations on the Abolition of Slavery and the Slave Trade;’ and as it is probable

that Mr. — has given you only an abridged account of the extraordinary Maryland negro, the full narrative shall be enclosed. Of its authenticity I have no doubt, as I know Dr. Rush to be a man of observation and probity; and we have now a gentleman in Manchester who has seen and conversed with the slave, and who confirms the account which has been given of him. The contests about the regency have hitherto absorbed the public attention; but the happy re-establishment of his Majesty's health, I trust, will soon restore parliamentary business to its usual course; and that the House of Commons will, in a month or two, resume the subject of the African Slave Trade. In a letter, dated Jan. 22, from the Bishop of London, his Lordship says to me, 'had the present ministry continued, I should have entertained the most sanguine hopes of success.' The present ministry, it is now probable, will be continued; and I heartily pray that this excellent prelate's sanguine hopes may be realized. The Marquis of Lansdown informs me, he has heard the best officers of England and France say, that both nations *lose* as many sailors as they *make* in the West-Indies.

"I am now engaged in the perusal of Mr. Howard's 'Account of the Lazarettos, Prisons, and Hos-

‘pitals, in Europe,’ which is just come from the press in Warrington, and of which he has favoured me with a copy. Concerning Malta, he says, ‘the knights being sworn to make perpetual war against the Turks, carry off by piracy many of the peasants, fishermen, and sailors, from the Barbary coast. How dreadful! (he adds) that those who glory in bearing on their breasts the sign of the Prince of Peace, should harbour such malignant dispositions against their fellow-creatures, and by their own example encourage piracy in the states of Barbary.’ I wish you could take some notice in your work of the slavery which still virtually subsists amongst the *colliers* and *falters* of Scotland, though nominally abolished by the 15th of Geo. III. In a letter to our Committee, Dr. Anderson asserts, that the labour in a coal mine is at least three times more expensive than any other common work in the district where they reside; and that it is nearly twice as high as the labour of freemen in other coal mines.

Have you seen a spirited performance on the subject of the Slave Trade, supposed to be written by the Marquis de Condorcet? Madame Neckar has translated and circulated in France several of the most interesting English tracts on this subject.

“ I have troubled you with a longer letter than it was my intention when I sat down; and I shall now relieve you by an assurance, &c.”

No. XXXIII.

From Madame NECKAR to Dr. PERCIVAL.

“ Versailles, March 9, 1789.

“ I RECEIVED, Sir, in the month of February the two excellent works* which you sent me in October. Accustomed to pay the greatest respect to your talents and to your labours, I rejoice at the new service which you have rendered to humanity, and I have already experienced in the perusal of your books much pleasure and entertainment. It would not be possible for me, considering the little time I have to dispose of, to send you any remarks upon that variety of topics which you have treated in your two volumes. You have the art of thinking for yourself, and of exciting your readers to think; of touching upon subjects which interest mankind both individually and

* “ Moral and Literary Dissertations,” and “ A Father’s Instructions.”

collectively. I have read in particular, with a pleasure which I have not a long time felt, your piece ‘On the Association of Ideas;’ and I shall often again peruse it in the course of my life, even though it should not be of long duration. It seems to me that your ingenious metaphysics have revealed to us some new secrets of virtue.

“Your wishes for the suppression of the Trade in Negroes are not more ardent than mine. The English have written many treatises upon this subject, and nothing, I think, ever did more honour to their nation. But a general concurrence of all the European powers being wanting to effectuate the abolition, the wishes of individuals have hitherto been rendered fruitless. I can answer for the heart of M. Neckar; a heart which embraces the whole human race, and which knows no greater felicity upon earth, than that of contributing to make their lot more comfortable. But he must endeavour to give a consistency to his various duties, and consider the good of France before that of Africa. For my own part, who judge of things only by sentiment, and am accountable only to my own heart, I turn my thoughts incessantly towards a revolution, without which it appears to me, we can never hope to be Christians, or even to be men.

“ Go on, generous English, to set the example of all the good which is done in the world! and may we be always your rivals, and never your enemies! I know enough of the English to admire you, but not enough of your language to enable me adequately to tell you so. I am now at Versailles, &c. &c.

“ C. DE NAS NECKAR.

No. XXXIV.

From Dr. PERCIVAL to Madame NECKAR.

“ *Manchester, 1789.*

“ I CANNOT decline the opportunity which my friend M. *** affords me, of conveying to you through him my most grateful acknowledgments for the honour of your letter dated March. Your approbation of the little works which I took the liberty of sending to you, is highly flattering to me. * * * I cordially congratulate you on the great changes which are now, I trust, accomplished in France; and to which M. Neckar's excellent writings and patriotic administration have powerfully contributed. Your country now presents the most interesting and august scene ever exhibited on the theatre of the world; and

I hope no clouds will arise, to obscure the brightness of the prospect which is before you.

“Permit me again to solicit your influence with M. Neckar, in behalf of the Negroes. The terms in which you state his comparative obligations towards France and Africa, are not, perhaps, strictly accurate. A great Minister is responsible for the honour and probity of the people whose affairs he directs; and no end, however desirable, ought to be pursued by unjustifiable means. But in nations, as well as individuals, there exists a high and magnanimous, as well as a sordid and ignoble, interest; and whenever these are in competition, there can assuredly be no doubt about the preference. With regard to the infamous trade in the lives and liberties of our fellow-creatures, I trust it will appear, that policy and profit are light in the balance against justice and humanity; and that they will besides, eventually, on a more enlarged view, be found perfectly compatible. * * * I beg leave to offer my respectful compliments to M. Neckar, and my sincere wishes that the health and life of one so invaluable to his country and to mankind may long be preserved.

“With the greatest esteem and regard, I have the honour to be, &c.”

No. XXXV.

From Dr. PERCIVAL to the Rev. T. B. PERCIVAL.

“ Manchester, Feb. 1790.

“ YOUR letter was not delivered to me till we were just about to set down to dinner, and being engaged with company, I could not comply with your request to answer it by return of post. * * * You enquire my opinion concerning the requisition from Chester.* As to yourself, I am assured, that on the present, and on every occasion, you will act as becomes a man of honour and integrity. Let your judgment be unbiaſſed either by a regard to private interest, or by that which too often influences good minds—*l’ esprit du corps*. You are called upon to give a decision in a cause which affects the rights and privileges of nearly three millions of your fellow Christians; and as ‘ he who allows oppression, shares ‘ the crime,’ it behoves you to consider well, whether

* Requisition for a Meeting of the Clergy of the Church of England, to prepare a Counter-Petition to the Legislature, against the Dissenters, in favour of the Corporation and Test Acts.

Dissent from the Church of England can justify the disfranchisement of so large a body of citizens. To me it appears to derogate from the dignity and respectability of an ecclesiastical establishment, which has for its head and protector the Supreme Magistrate of the country; which composes, by its Bishops, a part of the Legislature; which is sanctioned by the most solemn laws; and which is supported by large revenues and appropriate honours; to seek for its defence by a degradation and oppression of those who are not within the pale of its communion.

“ The Test Act, when framed, was not designed to act against Protestant Non-conformists; from whom no danger, either to the Church or State, was then apprehended. Is it therefore *reasonable* now to take the alarm; or *justifiable*, on account of imaginary fears, to inflict real evils on fellow-Protestants and fellow-subjects? If dangers shall hereafter occur, (which God forbid!) they may easily and honourably be provided against by a new Test Law, or by other means which the circumstances of the times shall suggest, or the wisdom of the legislature devise. The Corporation Act was a part of that system of persecution, renewed against the Non-conformists under the second Charles; who, as Mr. Hume observes,

‘ eluded and violated all his promises, in the declara-
‘ tion of Breda, of a liberty to tender consciences,
‘ and that no man should be disquieted or called in
‘ question in matters of religion which do not disturb
‘ the peace of the kingdom.’ To perpetuate, there-
fore, what originated in falsehood, injustice, and des-
potism, cannot, I think, be consistent with the true
principles of a Church, which I have always thought,
and which is universally acknowledged, to be the most
liberal in Christendom.

“ An ecclesiastical establishment, which claims an
intimate alliance with the state, seems to be pecu-
liarly bound to promote the purity of the laws ; to
purge them from all injustice, and to aid the civil
magistrate in being a terror to evil doers, and a
friend and protector of those who do well. The
maxim which Cicero puts into the mouth of Scipio,
may with still greater propriety be adopted by a
Christian church, ‘ *hoc modo, falsum esse illud sine*
‘ *injuria non posse ; sed hoc veri primum sine summa*
‘ *justitiâ rempublicam regi non posse.*’ It is not
sufficient, either in civil or religious policy, that the
end pursued be good ; the *means* also to be employed
for its attainment must be fair and honourable.
But I will not enlarge further upon the subject.

Weigh it well. Consult **** ; and however little import your decision may be in the general award, to your own mind it will be of the most serious consequence, that it should be consonant to wisdom and rectitude.”

No. XXXVI.

From Dr. PERCIVAL to the BISHOP of LANDAFF.

“ THE very obliging letter with which your Lordship indulged me, merited a more early acknowledgment. I thank you for the friendly advice to my son* which it contains; and I entirely concur with you in opinion, that his time may be more usefully employed than in the study of Oriental literature. He is now gone to Oxford, and will proceed from thence to London. * * * *

“ I am now satisfied that he has chosen the profession best adapted to his genius and disposition. Our friend, Mr. Hornby,† gives me the pleasing assurance that he is likely to become an ornament to

* The Rev. T. B. Percival.

† The Rev. Geoffry Hornby, of Winwick, in Lancashire; under whom Mr. Percival at that time held a curacy.

it; and speaks in the highest terms of his exemplary conduct. That his abilities in the pulpit are approved, may be presumed from his having been invited to preach a public charity sermon in Manchester, though so young a man, and in the lowest clerical order; and from another invitation of the same kind, to deliver the anniversary discourse at Liverpool, for the benefit of the Infirmary and Lunatic Hospital.

Of the several pamphlets which you mention in your letter, I have read with the highest satisfaction those of the Duke of Grafton, and of a Consistent Protestant. The latter, if I mistake not, has yet been unanswered, and, in my opinion, it is indeed unanswerable: it is a model for all polemical writers, and if followed, the *odium theologicum* would soon be at an end. Next week I expect a visit from my friend Dr. Priestley, to whom I shall particularly recommend the perusal of the paragraph, page 110; because, I think, he is too fond of ‘the petty artillerie of controversy.’ In religious debates, Gospel meekness and charity are no less requisite, than Gospel plainness and sincerity.

“Has your Lordship seen the last volume of the Memoirs of our Literary Society? I hear it is well

spoken of.—My second son, who is now at Edinburgh, and often visits Lord Monboddo, says, that his Lordship is greatly delighted with M. Chevalier, a French gentleman, who has lately been his guest, who speaks Greek fluently, and has ascertained to *his complete satisfaction* the actual site of Troy.

“The Bill for the relief of the Protestant Catholic Dissenters appears to be framed upon conditions and under restrictions discreditable to our Legislature at this enlightened period. The *proviso* that the Act shall not extend to persons *writing* against the Trinity, Mr. Berrington told me, very much surprized him. If some Clarke or Calvin shall hereafter arise as reformers amongst the Romanists, our laws will silence them by penalties and punishments fit only to be inflicted by inquisitors. If I remember right, my Lord Mansfield made a distinction (in the cause of the Dissenter who was fined for not serving the office of Sheriff) between the discussion and the reviling of religion. The former Christianity enjoins; the latter is an offence against decency and good order, and perhaps not to be tolerated. Yet the civil magistrate who interferes even in such a case, engages in what is peculiarly delicate and perilous.

No. XXXVII.

From the BISHOP of LANDAFF to Dr. PERCIVAL.

“ Calgarth, May 11, 1791.

“ DIRECTING a letter for Col. Townley to you, puts me in mind of my omission in not answering your last letter. I received it at this place, and consequently had no opportunity of shewing any attention to your son in London. I am so totally taken up with improving an estate and building a house, that I have no leisure for literary pursuits ; and begin to think that the preceding part of my life has been misemployed. In this retirement, however, I have read both Dr. Priestley’s and Mr. Paine’s answers to Mr. Burke ; and admire them both. The bulk of the people in England will admire Mr. Burke’s principles, for they have a cast of Toryism in them ; and the general run of readers have little and confused sentiments concerning their natural or civil rights. My health is better than it used to be, &c.”

No. XXXVIII.

*From Dr. PERCIVAL to * * *.†*

“ March 1791.

“ WHAT a loss have we sustained, my dear friend and fellow-mourner ! The fatal stroke which has deprived us of one so valued, and so inestimably valuable, will be deeply felt by each of us, long after the turbulent emotions of grief have subsided. I trust a friendship that has been so strong and permanent, will subsist beyond the grave ; and that we shall not only recognize the object of our tender regard, but enjoy, in a more perfect and increasing degree, all the reciprocations of love. Time seems, indeed, to suppress some of the finest moral sentiments of the heart. But the cessation of an energy is not its extinction ; and it may be renewed in full vigour by the restoration of the existing cause which first called it forth. Of the truth of this opinion, so interesting to our wishes, we have some proof in occur-

† On occasion of the Death of a much-valued Female Friend.

rences during the present life. The dear companion of our youth, whom we had forgotten, through the lapse of years, we meet again by some happy incident with inexpressible delight ; and find that our affection still exists without abatement. In the world of spirits, it is probable, that our mental constitution will remain unchanged in its essence, though advancing to higher and higher degrees of perfection ; and as the intercourse of a finite being can never be infinite, it may be presumed, that there must always subsist gradations in our moral sympathies. Nor is partial affection inconsistent with general benevolence. It is the centre from which myriads of radii may proceed, extending to a wider and wider circumference, as our knowledge advances of the intelligent creation of God. For love is capable of indefinite augmentation ; it is a flame, which, the further it illuminates, becomes more warm and bright to the objects which are nearer to it.

“ In our tender recollections of a departed friend, there seems to be some anticipation of that more refined intercourse which we are to enjoy with him hereafter. His infirmities are forgotten ; all caprice and jealousy cease ; and we remember only his virtues and his offices of love. May such be the

renewal of our society with the object whom we now lament ; and may this rupture in the chain of friendship draw closer the links which still remain."

* * * * *

No. XXXIX.

From the Same to the Same.

" Manchester, April 25, 1791.

" TO enjoy your correspondence, is a privilege which I prize highly at all times; but I am not so selfish as to wish for it when inconsistent with your important and necessary avocations. It affords me cordial satisfaction to find that you reject with firmness and confidence the doctrine of Materialism; so far at least as it includes the *natural mortality* of the human mind. Whether the soul be spirit, or some unknown species of matter, I am not solicitous to determine; but that it is a principle distinct from the organization of the brain, and originally constituted for endless existence, I stedfastly believe; and would not change the conviction for all that philosophy can

boast, or the acutest metaphysics supply. I lament that the mistaken zeal of Dr. Priestley, for the honour and interest of Christianity, has led him to reject every evidence for a future state, but that which is merely historical, the resurrection of our SAVIOUR from the dead. Though I seriously believe in the truth of the Gospel, I freely confess that such evidence would have been insufficient to satisfy my doubts, if I had conceived that the life and immortality brought to light were repugnant, as my friend asserts, to every analogy of creation, and every discovery of uninspired reason. The revelation of CHRIST I regard as a display of the perfection of human intelligence, as evincing what was before seen darkly, the sublimity of our expectations, and the eternal duration and improvement of our created powers. This consonance of revelation with reason, of the religion of the Gospel with that of nature, affords an internal evidence of its verity, more clear and forcible than all the miracles which are recorded, or all the testimonies adduced, of their notoriety.—But this topic suits not the narrow bounds of a letter; and I must hasten to thank you, &c.”

No. XL.

From Dr. PERCIVAL to Dr. HARGARTH.

“ Manchester, 1793.

“ THE publication of your “ Sketch ” I have not yet seen announced in the papers. **** is a very honest man, but he will stand in need of an occasional spur to his exertions. The delay in the conveyance of your work was mortifying ; and I lament that the public is now so fully and solicitously engaged in the great political events of Europe, as to be less likely to pay due regard to your important proposals.* However you will have executed the office of a wise and patriotic citizen ; and the time, I trust, will come, when the merits of your plan will command general esteem, and secure its adoption.

“ I have thanks to return you, for having first recommended to my notice M. Neckar’s productions.

* Proposals for exterminating the Small-Pox.

All his works I have successively read, with great attention and satisfaction. His Essay on the Executive Power, I procured nearly twelve months ago. It contains much interesting matter; and I am inclined to coincide with the author's opinions in most points that are essential. But M. Neckar, like all foreigners who have written upon our Constitution, confound its theory with the actual practice. In generals it is excellent in both, but in particulars an opposition often subsists between them. Thus, in theory, the *three estates*, according to Locke, Somers, Montesquieu, Blackstone, &c. are independent; but in practice they are otherwise. In theory, the King's prerogative is limited by law; in practice, *influence* (the modern substitute for prerogative) is indefinitely extended, and rapidly increasing. In theory, the people speak through their representatives; in practice, this representation is imperfect; and through this imperfection, a fourth estate, as it were, has been created, not recognized by the Constitution. In theory, the King is wisely invested with a negative power, relative to those laws which he is to execute. But time, the greatest of all innovators, (as Lord Bacon expresses it,) seems to have virtually set aside this prerogative, and established a substitute injurious to

morals, and unfavourable to happiness. In theory, the King himself can do no wrong, for he is counselled, and acts by his Ministers; and it is reasonable that they should therefore be responsible. Look back, however, to the administration of Sir Robert Walpole, and of many of his successors, and this responsibility will hardly appear practically to exist: but the subject is too copious for a letter. I am equally with you a zealous lover of my country, and a warm admirer of its form of government, which I would not have exchanged for any other, either conceived or established, in the world. My solicitude is for the security of what is so invaluable, by the reformation of abuses, and by restoring to each estate its true dignity, independence, and efficiency. We should remember also, that the human mind, in nations as well as individuals, is progressive; that to promote this progress is one of the most important objects of the social union; and that political improvements should therefore proceed in a gentle pace, but always proportionate to such advancement. Happy would it have been for the wretched and distracted country of France, if the wise and temperate counsels of M. Neckar had been properly regarded by its unfortunate king, and still more unfortunate people.

No. XLI.

From the Same to the Same.

“ Manchester, 1793.

“ THOUGH writing renews emotions which it is my study and duty to calm, yet I cannot, and indeed ought not to forbear the return of my most grateful acknowledgments for your kind and consolatory letter. The sympathy of friendship is a healing balm to sorrow; and you have superadded considerations of acquiescence, equally directed to the understanding and the heart. I am fully sensible of their value and their force, and through the goodness of GOD, my mind has been supported with tolerable firmness in this trying dispensation. Neither has my health been much impaired, excepting for a few days only; for happily I was uncommonly well during several weeks before the melancholy event of my son's death. At the same period too, *** had just recovered from a most severe and alarming fit of asthma.

From St. Petersburg also, at this critical juncture, we received with extraordinary expedition, (by one of the King's messengers,) two letters, announcing the tidings of my eldest son's convalescence, and that he was to perform divine service on the following Sunday. In judgment, therefore, we experienced mercy; and I feel devoutly thankful to that Being who gives and takes away in love.

The origin of *evil*, to which you refer as a difficulty, appears to be such only, through the adoption of an improper term. Of those physical operations that are denominated evil, we know not the final cause; and from the prevalence of harmony and good cognizable by us, we are warranted from analogy to conclude, that *all* is harmonious and good. *Absolute* physical evil, therefore, has probably no existence in the universe. And if the world which we inhabit be regarded in a relative view, not as the portion of a great system, but as the theatre of action to man, the unceasing and uniform operation of general laws will be found essential to the exercise of his rational powers, and to his comfort, advancement, and well-being in life. Were the state of things changed, there could be no investigation, no forecast, no certainty either of expectation or enjoyment.

Moral evil is an improper term for imperfection, that imperfection which is inherent in every finite being. This life is the commencement of an immortal existence; it is the school of our infancy, where we are to be trained and disciplined; where folly is to be corrected, weakness strengthened, knowledge acquired, and virtuous habits established. It is probable, that through all eternity the powers and faculties of man will be progressive; and that as his sphere enlarges, his talents will be more and more exercised; yet still perhaps liable to occasional obstacles and deviations; for the Deity alone is perfect and unerring in all his ways.”

The *event* which forms the subject of the last letter, was one of the most afflictive which human nature is called to sustain. It was the death of a beloved son,* whose endowments had raised high and merited expectations of future distinction, just at the period of completing the course of a liberal education. He

* James Percival, the second son of the subject of this narrative. See APPENDIX.F.

fell a sacrifice, in the twenty-fourth year of his age, (February 25th, 1793,) to a malignant fever, which he had contracted whilst prosecuting his medical studies at the University of Edinburgh.

To estimate the loss, or describe the sorrow occasioned by such an event, need not be attempted by the writer of these Memoirs. He cannot, however, refrain from observing, in memory of one so deeply lamented, that indications of future eminence, more flattering to the individual, or more gratifying to a parent, than those which marked *his* dawning talents, are seldom granted by nature with equally indulgent bounty. The sincere and generous affections of his mind displayed at once the fairest characteristics of moral excellence. His intercourse with books and with the world had already furnished him largely with useful acquisitions; whilst the value of that knowledge was enhanced by the impress which it received from his own understanding. Nor was the light of genius wanting to give lustre to his varied powers; his essays, both in literature and science, gave assurance, that performances of no feeble merit might be the fruit of a riper period; and that his talents, doomed as they were to an unexpected grave, did not perish in untimely vigour.

The affliction experienced on this melancholy occasion was aggravated by the loss which Dr. Percival had recently sustained, in the removal of his eldest son to St. Petersburg, where he resided as Chaplain to the Factory of British Merchants. Of his return from that distant settlement, little expectation could be indulged for many years; so that the subject of this narrative might feel himself bereft on a sudden, by these events, of his earliest and most valued hopes. But his mind was open to the consolations of reason; and he cherished with delight the animating resources of his religion.—The first pursuit in which he sought relief from the dejection of his mind, was the investigation of the interesting but difficult question respecting the purpose of moral and physical evil. The disquisition which he formed on that subject with much care and deliberation, besides its merit in other respects, furnishes no light manifestation of the energy and the cheerfulness of his piety. It was afterwards published by him, (in the *third part* of “A Father’s Instructions,”) and entitled, *A Discourse on the Divine Permission of Evil, Physical and Moral.*

Dr. Percival occupied himself soon afterwards in forming a Code of Institutes and Precepts, designed to regulate the conduct of the medical faculty; a work

which he had already commenced, with a view to the benefit of the son, whose death he was now deploring. Under the title of *Medical Jurisprudence*, it was committed to the press; not for the immediate purpose of publication, but in order to distribute copies of the work to his numerous literary and professional friends, for the advantage of their judgment and criticism. The Treatise has since undergone some improvement and considerable enlargement, and is at present before the public, under the more appropriate title of *Medical Ethics*.——The following letters are among the number of those which the author received in return for his communication of the work, in its first form. They are selected on the present occasion, not because they are more flattering, or possibly more judicious, testimonies of its merit, than many others; but because they proceeded from judges of acknowledged abilities; the former, medical practitioners of the first eminence; the latter, a profound adept in criticism and morals.

No. XLII.

From Dr. HEBERDEN to Dr. PERCIVAL.

“ Windsor, Aug. 28, 1794.

“ IT is owing to my distance from London that I have not sooner made my acknowledgments, and returned my thanks for your very obliging letter. Your being able to resume the work you had in hand, makes me hope that your good principles, with the aid of time, have greatly recovered your mind from what you must have suffered on occasion of the great loss in your family ; and your attention in the prosecution of it will powerfully assist in perfectly restoring your tranquillity. What you have already communicated to the public with so much just applause, shews you to be peculiarly well qualified for drawing up a code of Medical Ethics, by the just sense you have of your duties as a man, and by the masterly knowledge of your profession as a physician. I hope it will not be long before the sheets already printed come to my hands ; and I return you many thanks for intending to favour me with a sight of them.

“ The pleasure of a visit from one of Dr. Haygarth’s merit, whom I have long known and esteemed, would probably give me spirits, and make me think myself less broken than I am. I have entered my eighty-fifth year; and when I retired a few years ago from the practice of physic, I trust it was not with a wish to be idle, which no man capable of being usefully employed has a right to be; but because I was willing to give over before my presence of thought, judgment, and recollection were so impaired, that I could not do justice to my patients. It is more desirable for a man to do this a little too soon than a little too late; for the chief danger is on the side of a man not doing it soon enough.”

No. XLIII.

From the Same to the Same.

“ *Pall-Mall, Oct. 15, 1794.*

“ BY mistake or neglect of the person left in my house in London, to which I am just returned, your code of Medical Jurisprudence had been sent hither some time before I had been made acquainted with

it. I have read it, and do not wonder that nothing could be found by me, or by any one, to add or to alter, after a work of this kind had passed through the hands of one so much master of the subject, and who had taken no little time to consider it, and to make the proper improvements. I am confident that the same might be said of them, were I to read the two chapters that remain to be finished. If your judicious advice and rules were duly observed, they would greatly contribute to support the dignity of the profession, and the peace and comfort of the professors. There has lately been established in several of the London hospitals, a plan of courses of lectures in all the branches of knowledge useful to a student of physic. Such plans, if rightly executed, as I have no reason to doubt they will be, must make London a school of physic superior to most in Europe. The experience afforded in an hospital will keep down the luxuriance of plausible theories. Many such have been delivered in lectures, by celebrated teachers, with great applause; but the students, though perfectly masters of them, not having corrected them with what nature exhibits in an hospital, have found themselves more at a loss in the cure of a patient than an elder apprentice of an apothecary. I please myself with thinking that

the method of teaching the art of healing is becoming every day more conformable to what reason and nature require; that the errors introduced by superstition and false philosophy are gradually retreating; and that medical knowledge, as well as all other dependent upon observation and experience, is continually increasing in the world. The present race of physicians are possessed of several most important rules of practice, utterly unknown to the ablest in former ages, not excepting Hippocrates himself, or even Æsculapius."

No. XLIV.

From Sir GEORGE BAKER, Bart. to Dr. PERCIVAL.

"Jermyn-street, May 9, 1794

--- "WHAT I have seen of the Medical Jurisprudence meets with my entire approbation; and I hope you will soon have time to complete the whole work. The dignity of Physic cannot any where be well

supported without harmony and due subordination among those practitioners whom neighbourhood has connected; nor can the evils which are apt to arise in their common intercourse be more probably averted than by the voluntary subscription of the Faculty to such laws as you have proposed. In our statute book at the College of Physicians, we have a chapter ‘*De Conversatione Morali*,’ some parts of which are similar to your Medical Jurisprudence; but your laws are fuller and more comprehensive. With respect to them, I can truly say, that I find much to admire, and nothing to criticise.

“The honour* intended for me will be much valued; (in Terentian phrase,) ‘*non tam ob ipsum donum quam quod abs te datum.*’ One may be permitted to be proud of the friendship of good men, without incurring the imputation of vanity.

“Your son’s Discourse on Hospital Duties I have read with particular pleasure. It is a judicious and elegant composition; and I congratulate you, ‘*qui filium habeas tali ingenio præditum.*’

* The volume of Medical Ethics is inscribed to Sir George Baker, bart.

No. XLV.

*From the Rev. SAMUEL PARR, LL.D. to the
Rev. T. B. PERCIVAL, LL.B.*

(Or, in his absence,) to Dr. PERCIVAL.

“ I RETURNED hither a few days ago from Birmingham, where I had an opportunity of receiving the publication* which your father did me the honour of sending for my acceptance. Permit me to convey, through you, my thankful acknowledgments for this mark of his attention; and to assure you, that the subject which you have chosen, and the relation in which you stand to Dr. Percival, gave me, on this occasion, a much keener curiosity than I usually feel in sitting down to the perusal of sermons, even where I have reason to presume that they are well intended, and well written.

“ I am not accustomed to trifle with my correspondents, or to degrade myself by the jargon of

* “ Discourse on Hospital Duties,” by the Rev. T. B. Percival, annexed to the Treatise on “ Medical Ethics.

vague and trite panegyric ; but to you, Sir, I speak only the language of just and sincere commendation, when I say that my expectations, high and eager as they were, have not been disappointed.

“ With striking and peculiar felicity you have blended the elegance of a Dissertation with the seriousness of a Sermon. Your topics are selected with propriety, and arranged with exactness ; your style is polished without gaudiness, and animated without extravagance. Your remarks are such as could occur only to a mind deeply interested in the subject, and amply qualified for the discussion of it by frequent and accurate observation. In the appeals which you have made to the passions of your hearers, you have wisely abstained from popular and rampant exaggeration ; and the facts which you have set before their understandings, equally deserve consideration from every prejudiced objector and every enlightened well-wisher to the Institution which you meant to recommend. Through the range which you have taken over the various classes of duty assigned to persons of various professions, you will find a willing and attentive follower in every man who is capable of reflecting on that happy order of things, in which earthly and spiritual wisdom, compassion, and piety, the dili-

gence of the unlearned, and the skill of the learned, are all made to co-operate in the great and sacred cause of benevolence. Of philosophy you have employed enough, and not more than enough, to infuse fresh vigour into some of the more important parts; and over the whole you have sprinkled the precious dew of Scripture, judiciously and reverently.

“ Such, Sir, are the impressions left upon my mind by the perusal of your excellent Discourse; and perhaps you will not be displeased to hear, that my very accomplished and worthy friend, Dr. Johnstone, spoke of it in terms of approbation similar to my own.

“ In regard to the advertisement which is prefixed to it in the name of Dr. Percival, I could not read it without a pang. I cannot reflect upon it without strong emotions of sympathy with him on the loss of such a son, trained up under the auspicious example of such a father to erudition, science, and virtue.

“ Present, Sir, I beg of you, my best respects to Dr. Percival; and forgive me, Sir, when I intreat and even exhort you to soothe the anguish of his soul, by redoubling your own efforts in the acquisition of knowledge, in the exercise of humanity, and

in the diffusion of those sound and salutary instructions which unite the best interests of society with the pure and sublime principles of true religion. With great esteem for your talents, and unfeigned wishes for your welfare, &c."

No. XLVI.

From the Same to Dr. PERCIVAL.

"Hatton, Sept. 24, 1794.

"PERMIT me to thank you for the kind and elegant letter which I last week had the honour of receiving from you; and to assure you that nothing but the pressure of numerous and some of them important matters would have prevented me from making a more early acknowledgment. I am not only no stranger to the respectability of your general character; but I have read with great attention and great satisfaction several of the works by which you have adorned your profession, and endeavoured ably to enlighten and improve mankind. You have a right, therefore, to call upon my gratitude as well as my politeness, when you are disposed to ask my opi-

nion upon any intended publication; and you may depend both upon my earnestness to judge rightly, and my readiness to communicate my judgment fairly and respectfully. I ought to do so, whether I consider the importance of the subject, or the abilities and virtues of the writer. Last night I received a copy of your work on Medical Jurisprudence, and this morning I have given to the perusal of it all the time I could spare from some critical enquiries which I am making for the use of an old friend, and the result of which I must communicate by to-day's post.

“ I have read the three first chapters, and in no one instance did I feel one moment's hesitation in assenting to your sage and humane observations. The sight of Beccaria's name forcibly hurried away my eye to the last chapter; and there I found some difficulties, which, after re-considering them, I shall take the liberty to communicate.

“ You will excuse me for stating that my father was an apothecary and surgeon at Harrow; that he was a man of a very robust and vigorous intellect; that he wished to educate me in that profession which boasts of Dr. Percival as one of its noblest ornaments; that for two or three years I attended to his business; and that I have long been in the habit

of reading on medical subjects. The great advantage I have derived from these circumstances is, that I have found opportunities for conversation and friendship with a class of men, whom after a long and attentive survey of character, I have found to be *the most enlightened* professional persons in the circle of human arts and sciences.

“ Give me leave to congratulate you on the happy and honourable situation of your very accomplished son; and to express my sincere hope that in his increasing knowledge and future prospects you may find some consolation for your melancholy loss.”

Dr. PERCIVAL was now arrived at that period of life, when it commonly happens that the energies and vigour of maturity begin sensibly to decline. His bodily constitution, which from childhood had never been robust, was preserved with diligent care, so as to secure in a moderate degree the comfort of health, and the capacity of exertion. He was still, however, subject to periodical attacks of severe head-ache; and on these occasions he suffered during several hours the most acute pain, sometimes followed by oppressive languor.* But with the exception of this

* The habitual cheerfulness which Dr. Percival maintained under the frequent attacks of this disorder, is assuredly worthy of remark. I am disposed even to transcribe in this place the following playful consolatory observations, which he offers to a much-valued correspondent, who was frequently afflicted with the same malady:—

“ In my sympathy with you under the head-ache, I am inclined to derive some comfort, from adding your highly-respectable name to a list of very distinguished personages, St. Paul, Virgil, Pope, &c. &c. who have enjoyed strong intellects with weak heads. Sydenham, a martyr to the gout, consoles himself with the reflection that princes, generals, admirals, and philosophers, have been subject to its tortures; and that it destroys more rich than

malady, which seemed to abate in violence as he advanced in years, his health was seldom interrupted by any material ailment ; and from the encroachment of imaginary ills no man was more perfectly or happily exempt.

It may perhaps be lamented, that the *Correspondence* of Dr. Percival, which occupies a preceding part of this narrative, furnishes few details of the events and habits of his private life. “ The business of a biographer” (says an illustrious master* in that branch of literature) “ is often to pass slightly “ over those performances which produce vulgar

“ poor persons, and more wise men than fools. To this ironical “ observation, he subjoins one both just and pious ; viz. that such “ dispensations evince the impartiality of Divine Providence, in “ favouring those who want the conveniences of life with beneficial “ exemptions, and tempering the blessings of others with a proportionate admixture of evil.”

“ In the history of head-ache, the fact mentioned by Lady Russell, “ in one of her letters to Dr. Fitzwilliam, is particularly curious. Her “ Ladyship states, that, ‘ being to linger in a world she can no more “ delight in, God has given her a freedom from bodily pain, to a “ degree she almost never knew ; not so much as a strong fit of head- “ ache having been felt by her since that miserable time, [the “ execution of Lord Russell,] with which she used to be tormented “ very frequently.”

LETTER TO MRS. H. MORE.

* Dr. Johnson.

“ greatness, to lead the thoughts into domestic privacies, and display the minute details of daily life ;
 “ where exterior appendages are cast aside, and men
 “ excel each other only by prudence and virtue.”

The precept, whether applicable or not to general biography, might, on a partial view, seem appropriate to a character, which was distinguished by having illustrated, in the most minute and most important offices of life, the same perfect consistency of moral conduct. It might justly be observed of the Subject of this Memoir, that the attributes of the philosopher belonged not more properly to the writer than to the man ; and that he ceased not to aim at the highest dignity of human virtue, by conforming his habitual sentiments to the dictates of enlightened reason ;
 “ το φρονειν μονον αγαθον, το δ'αφρονειν κακον.” So habitually temperate and measured was his conduct, that, in truth, the course of a long career furnished scarcely any of those personal incidents in which vulgar curiosity is apt to delight. The embarrassments occasioned by the over-ruling influence of particular propensities, by the obstinacy of pride, or the frolics of vanity, found no place in the even tenor of a life devoted to the service of learning and philanthropy ; a life, which exemplified at once the energy and the

value of those speculative principles which philosophers have often vainly endeavoured to realize. The reader, therefore, who is acquainted with these attributes of Dr. Percival's character, may recognize both in his correspondence and more finished writings the essential features of his disposition. The same upright and benevolent spirit, the same candour of sentiment and urbanity of manner, the same ardour for improvement and zeal for the cause of truth, were discernible alike in the productions of his pen, and the conduct of his life. The "exterior appendages" to which the writer just quoted refers, hardly served to embellish, much less to exalt, the real dignity of his nature. So that the removal of the veil which sometimes conceals, even in great minds, a contrariety of sentiment and conduct, could in this instance disclose nothing which was not already manifest.

*"Ne famam quidem, cui etiam sæpe boni indulgent,
 "ostentanda virtute, aut per artem quæsit;—procul
 "æmulatione adversus collegas."*

In private society, Dr. Percival delighted to indulge the unreserved and social disposition of his nature. His more anxious pursuits were at once dismissed from his thoughts; and he exhibited the powers of his understanding, blended as they were with the attri-

butes of mildness and candour. His skill in conducting rational and polite conversation was among the most conspicuous of his accomplishments. The tranquil facility of his discourse rendered it peculiarly agreeable to his hearers, and left them at liberty to admire the graces of elegance and perspicuity. Exempt alike from the pedantry of the declaimer, the man of fashion, or the student, he neither sought "to dazzle" "with a luxury of light," nor studied to disguise the real merit or value of his opinions. He seldom however aimed at wit, and still more rarely at humour; except that he occasionally indulged a sportive playfulness on topics, which for the moment excited his fancy. In the company of strangers, his exertions visibly increased, when the energy and variety of his discourse hardly ever failed to equal the occasion on which it was exercised. It has been remarked by acute observers, that the language and periods which he used bore a striking resemblance to those of his written compositions: it might be observed too, that sometimes, though not commonly, his conversation assumed a more regular and measured form, than is perhaps suited to the unpremeditated effusions of social intercourse. But this propensity was obviously unconnected with affectation of any kind, and might proceed partly

from his habit of attending to the elegancies of speech, and partly from his native temper, which was averse both from levity and indifference.

The society of Dr. Percival was frequently diversified by the visits of strangers and foreigners of distinction, who came to indulge their curiosity in viewing the manufactures and the town of Manchester. His extensive correspondence with men of eminence in various departments was one cause of the frequency of these introductions; and doubtless his own fame, and his undisputed rank in the town where he resided, contributed to the same circumstance. These strangers were on all occasions received by him with polite and liberal hospitality; while their visits afforded him the opportunity, which in remote provincial parts is eagerly embraced, of listening to the history and proceedings of foreign countries.

It may be stated here, in compliance with chronological order, that the Subject of this Memoir, in conjunction with other professional and leading inhabitants of Manchester, projected a scheme, about this time, for regulating the police and the health of the Poor. The crowded and miserable habitations of the lowest orders of that town, their inattention to cleanliness and ventilation, together with the extreme po-

verty attendant on their dissolute manner of life, had conspired to introduce among them the most fatal and infectious disorders. The rapid increase of the labouring classes annually multiplied these evils to a greater extent; while the fertile resources of a populous neighbourhood prevented the experience of deficiencies from their excessive mortality. At length, however, the alarming spread of contagious fever, which hardly ever ceased to rage in some part of the town, admonished the better ranks to consult their own safety by remedying the disorders of the poor. Meetings were held, and different plans proposed, for preventing the origin, and stopping the progress, of malignant fever. Dr. Percival, and other physicians, presented memorials to the Committee, which constituted itself a "Board of Health," in the year 1796, stating minutely the methods to be adopted for this purpose, and the importance of their immediate application. They recommended a search to be made into the habitations, which had long harboured the poison of infection; and with the assistance of the officers of police, the enforcement of such new regulations, as cleanliness and ventilation required. They directed the sick to be removed to suitable wards in

the public Hospital, or to houses accommodated for a general reception;* and they especially enjoined, that the most effectual methods of purification should be applied to the houses which the sick had quitted, in order to prevent the further communication of disease. By the active execution of these measures, the health of the town rapidly improved; and by perseverance in the same laudable exertions, the return of the former aggravated evils has been prevented. So considerable were the benefits resulting from the institution of the “Board of Health” in Manchester, that the scheme has been imitated in various parts, and every where attended with the happiest consequences.†

* The latter of these schemes meeting with more general approbation, the Manchester Board of Health established *Fever Wards*, and afterwards erected a large building (under the denomination of a *House of Recovery*) in a situation a little distant from the General Infirmary, in order that no danger of communicating the infection of fever, to other hospital patients, might be incurred. For a full account of the minutes and *Proceedings of the Board of Health*, the reader is referred to a judicious publication bearing that title, and printed at Manchester in the year 1805.—See also APPENDIX G. where the *plan* which Dr. Percival proposed, and a communication of Dr. Haygarth on the same subject are inserted. The limits of the present work preclude the addition of other valuable papers by the Medical Faculty of Manchester.

† It may be proper to notice, (once for all,) that on this as on many similar occasions of public exertion, Dr. Percival had to contend against the opinions, and sometimes the prejudices, of a

In returning to the domestic occurrences of Dr. Percival's life, I am again called to mention a severe affliction which he sustained by the death of his eldest son,* at his residence in St. Petersburg. Mr. Percival had lately visited England; and by the indulgence of the British Factory, to whom he was chaplain, had been permitted to extend the term of his visit to the period of twelve months. During the latter part of this time, while he was enjoying the society of his friends and family, he was seized with a violent rheumatic fever, from which he had scarcely recovered when he again embarked for St. Petersburg. In the following year he suffered an attack of the same malady, complicated with more formidable symptoms; and in the month of May 1798, his danger became apparent. With singular fortitude he endured the progressive aggravation of his fatal disorder, and with

numerous opposition. The singular moderation and address by which he commonly succeeded in repelling the efforts of adverse party, has often been remarked to me, by persons more competent to judge of his conduct in these respects than I presume to be. On no occasion, it may be added, was his superior and conciliatory influence exerted to more effect, than in promoting the judicious designs of the Board of Health.

* The Rev. Thomas Bassnett Percival, LL.B. chaplain to the late Marquis of Waterford, and to the British Factory of Merchants at St. Petersburg. Vide APPENDIX II.

the serenity of a Christian philosopher, met the approaching period of his dissolution. He expired on the 27th day of the same month, in the thirty-second year of his age.

How deeply and sincerely Dr. Percival was affected by this event, it were superfluous to describe. It may be observed only that when the first struggles of nature had subsided, his wonted firmness returned, and his piety rose superior to the anguish of his feelings. In scenes of sorrow like the present, he exhibited a spectacle truly worthy of admiration; the silent and devout tranquillity of his own breast forming an affecting contrast with the severity of the affliction that assailed him. But the loss which he had sustained, was at his mature period of life irreparable; and the virtues of his son were such as had inspired no common degree of attachment. Purity and ingenuousness of disposition, a most lively and scrupulous sense of moral duty, were among his conspicuous excellencies. But the delicacy and perhaps the reserve of his mind often concealed the liberal accomplishments with which nature and education had furnished him. His attainments, (I may be allowed to add,) both as a scholar and divine, were considerable; and his pulpit discourses, whilst they manifest superior powers of

composition, breathe throughout the spirit of seriousness and liberality.

In the spring of the year 1809, Dr. Percival published a *third part*, in addition to the former volume of *A Father's Instructions*. This sequel is addressed exclusively to mature and cultivated understandings; and might have appeared in a separate form, had not a new edition of the preceding parts of the work been called for, just at the period when the author was furnished with materials for the present publication, by the receipt of a large packet of letters, formerly transmitted to his son at St. Petersburg. From these papers, which were written, he declares, “without
“the most distant view to publication,” selections were made, and arranged according to the order of their subjects, so as to give a systematic form to the whole. The *Discourse on the Divine Permission of Evil* was added to these miscellaneous disquisitions; and the general object of the work is ethical and religious enquiry.

This publication may be regarded as completing the design of *moral instruction*, which the author had commenced at an early period of his life.—Having already endeavoured to illustrate the nature of that design, and the singular merits of its execution, I presume not to enlarge upon them in the present place.

The appropriate purpose, however, of the last work may suggest a few observations. In some of the disquisitions which it contains, the writer discloses with freedom his private opinions on several controverted topics of natural and revealed religion. His acquaintance with theology had grown, by a long course of investigation, to be various and profound; yet his zeal for the propagation of its doctrines was invariably guarded by the temperate spirit of philosophy. The *belief* which he himself embraced, was the result of a patient and candid examination of the Scriptures, and of the best commentaries which have appeared. It accorded for the most part, if not entirely, with the doctrines of Arianism. But he was little anxious to designate by any particular appellation that creed which he adopted, as the offspring of his deliberate conviction. His dissent from the Church of England is seldom touched upon in any of his writings; while his respect for establishments in general, and especially for that of our own country, is often expressed both in his writings and correspondence. The following passage, extracted from a letter to the late Rev. Archdeacon Paley, contains the sum of his opinions with respect to national establishments of religion: "I am a Dissenter," says he, "but actuated

“ by the same spirit of catholicism which you pro-
 “ fess; an Establishment I approve; the Church of
 “ England in many respects I honour; and I should
 “ think it my duty to enter instantly into her com-
 “ munion, were the plan which you have proposed
 “ at the end of your tenth chapter carried into
 “ execution.” From a work so widely and familiarly
 known, as “ *The Principles of Moral and Political*
 “ *Philosophy*,” it were, perhaps, superfluous to offer
 any extracts. It may be added only, that the plan
 to which Dr. Percival alludes, is that of a “ com-
 “ prehensive national religion, guarded by a few
 “ articles of peace and conformity, together with a
 “ legal provision for the clergy of that religion;
 “ and with a complete toleration of all Dissenters
 “ from the Established Church, without any other
 “ limitation than what arises from the conjunction of
 “ dangerous political dispositions with certain reli-
 “ gious tenets.” Dr. Percival’s respect for Esta-
 blishments, and his conviction of their necessity for
 the maintenance of religious sentiments and social
 happiness, seemed even to increase in his latter years;
 and to accord more entirely with those prudent
 maxims which the religious anarchy of a neighbour-
 ing country has now generally diffused.

Notwithstanding, however, his fondness for theological enquiry, and his zealous attachment to the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, it may be observed, that he rarely approved, nor ever participated in the ardour of religious controversy. A strenuous advocate for the expediency of embracing definite sentiments of *belief*, he maintained at the same time the supremacy of individual opinion, and the regard due to that system of national faith, which has been preserved to us through so long a period by the eminent learning and integrity of its divines. “ The speculative doctrines of religion,” he declares, “ as they have no influence on the moral conduct of mankind, are comparatively of little importance. They cannot be understood by the generality even of Christians ; and the wise, the learned, and the good, have in all ages differed, and will ever continue to differ, about them. An intemperate zeal therefore for such points of faith betrays a weak understanding and a contracted heart ; and that zeal may justly be deemed intemperate, which exceeds the value of its object, and which abates our benevolence towards those who do not adopt the same opinions with ourselves.”

Dr. Percival has avowed, in the publication which has led to this digression, that “ at an early period of
 “ life his faith in Christianity was staggered for a
 “ while by the perusal of Mr. Hume’s Essay on Miracles.” The circumstance will not be deemed discreditable to his sagacity, nor the relation of it an unfavourable testimony of the ingenuousness of his mind. He has frequently, however, declared, that his faith was at no long interval again thoroughly confirmed ; and he attributed the final removal of his doubts to the powerful reasoning and copious illustration of Butler ; a writer whom he ever esteemed the chief pillar of Christian doctrine. “ Your attachment to Butler’s Analogy,” says he in a letter to his son, “ is very satisfactory to me. To no book
 “ am I under so great obligations ; for by the attentive perusal of it my full conviction of the truths
 “ of Christianity was restored.”

Shortly after the publication of the *Third Part of a Father’s Instructions* was dismissed from his hands, Dr. Percival engaged seriously in the prosecution of a work which has already been noticed under the title of *Medical Jurisprudence*. Having availed himself of the opinions and the criticisms of his principal correspondents, he proceeded with more confidence in

the task of prescribing rules of duty to the extensive body of the faculty of Physic. He relinquished, however, his original intention, which was to treat of the *powers, privileges, honours, and emoluments* of that faculty; as he conceived that this would lead him to a field of investigation too wide and digressive. He therefore confined himself to the more essential topics which belong appropriately to *Medical Ethics*. In the spring of the year 1803, his work was completed and sent to the press; and nearly the whole of a large impression* was sold and circulated in a few months. The voice of the public declared in its favour; and the testimonies of the best judges have stamped a value on the performance, which amply gratified the author's expectations.

As the work last noticed seemed to complete Dr. Percival's scheme of *moral* enquiry; so this latest production of his pen may be regarded as the conclusion of that plan of *professional* research and disquisition which he had commenced in the outset of his career. With peculiar propriety, too, he thus formed, at an advanced age, a monument to his fame, which exhibits in durable characters the wisdom and integrity of his

* A thousand copies.

private conduct.—By his former medical works (which had been, some time ago, augmented by the publication of a fourth volume of “*Essays*”) he had acquired the reputation of an accurate observer of nature, a faithful recorder of the phenomena of health and disease, and, above all, of a sagacious enquirer into the laws by which they are regulated. The original merit of these writings has been deemed to consist chiefly in the sound and legitimate application of the facts which his experience furnished, to the improvement of his professional art; nor will their intrinsic value be diminished in the eye of the philosopher, by the great superstructure of medical science which has been raised since these materials were contributed.

The utility of such a design as the “*Medical Ethics*” embrace, can be called in question by those only, who imagine that the principles and rules of human duty, which it is the business of the moralist to ascertain, have little influence on the practical conduct of life. Admitting, for a moment, the truth of so unpleasing a conjecture, it may yet be observed, that a wide difference subsists, between such treatises as aim at the establishment of speculative systems of morals, and those designs which comprehend only

the discipline and moral polity of individuals, acting in a specific capacity. That ethical institutes of the latter description may become of essential utility, when they are deduced from definite principles, and tend to definite purposes, will hardly be denied by the most rigid sceptic; while the more comprehensive speculatist will approve a design like the present, not only for its appropriate value, but as forming a part of the great scheme of social morality. The *Medical Ethics* of Dr. Percival, it is needless to observe, are designed for practical benefit; and however prudent or enlightened might be the previous sentiments of the Faculty, to whom the work is addressed, few can be disposed to regret that the rules of their conduct have been systematized into a Code, adapted equally to study and to reference.

In the preface to his work, the author states, that he had been anxious to seek the opinions and the sanction of several eminent moral writers, previous to its publication. The tributes of their approbation which he received, were undeniably honourable and gratifying. But perhaps his own unassuming pretensions comprehended a sufficient claim to the privilege which he exercised, in forming a system of professional jurisprudence; from his long-established eminence, as

a physician, from the soundness of his principles as a moralist, and the liberality of his manners as a gentleman.—With respect to the *original* merit of his design, it may be sufficient to remark, that the author was not solicitous to dispute his pre-eminence over writers who had treated particular departments of the same subject. Without attempting to supersede the value of their productions, he sought a distinct object, by a more comprehensive method than had hitherto been designed; embracing at once the official, the personal, and the corporate duties of the faculty of Physic.

In the beautiful and affectionate dedication of this work to his son, Dr. Percival anticipates in pathetic terms the approaching close of his life. “Sensible,” says he, “that I begin to experience the pressure of
“advancing years, I regard the present publication
“as the conclusion in this way of my professional
“labours. I may therefore, without impropriety,” he continues, “claim the privilege of consecrating
“them to you, as a paternal legacy.” Those around him, however, indulged the more flattering hope of protracted life, and a long period yet to come of usefulness and happiness. The temperate and prudent habits which he observed, together with

the suitable regulation of bodily and mental exercise, had preserved his constitution unimpaired to the season of age. Although he sometimes complained of the failure of his memory, the vigour of his mind appeared to his friends to have suffered hardly any diminution; and the sensibility of his feelings experienced neither injury nor decay to the latest hours of his existence: “*manent ingenia senibus, modo per-*”
“*manent studium et industria.*”

The short remaining period of Dr. Percival's life was not interrupted by any remarkable or personally interesting event. He continued to divide his time between the pursuits of his profession, the intercourse of his friends, and the private studies in which, especially, he delighted to indulge. “His labours were
“useful, his pleasures innocent, his wishes moderate;
“and he seemed to enjoy the state of happiness which
“is celebrated by poets and philosophers, as the most
“agreeable to nature, and the least accessible to for-
“tune.” In the conduct of his profession, he super-added to his practical skill the invaluable talent of conciliating the esteem, and preserving the respect of his brethren of the Faculty. The estimation, also, in which he was held by the general society around him, gratified his amplest wishes; for towards no

one was manifested a more universal sentiment of kindness or deference.—Of the public institutions, which he had laboured to establish, he had the satisfaction of witnessing the success and beneficial consequences. The Literary and Philosophical Society (the honour of whose foundation he might chiefly claim) had conducted its proceedings with considerable credit. The volumes of its *Memoirs* still hold the first rank among the publications of the various Provincial Societies of these kingdoms; and their merit is not unknown in foreign countries. Its debates continued to preserve a middle course between the formal declamations of professed speaking clubs, and the loose and familiar conversation of ordinary assemblies; whilst the members, selected from the inhabitants of a populous and enterprising town, brought to the discussion of many interesting subjects a stock of various and valuable knowledge, and exercised their ingenuity on matters of speculative as well as practical science.*——The success of the Man-

* The Literary Society has recently erected an elegant building, commodiously adapted to the purposes of the Institution. It consists of a large apartment, where the meetings are usually held; a similar one, accommodated for public lectures in the different branches of science; and a third appropriated to the library of the Society.

chester Academy, over whose councils Dr. Percival had till lately continued to preside, was for some time considerable. The respectable talents and learning of its tutors had attracted students to this seminary from various parts of the kingdom; and their numbers, though not great, were adequate to the plan and extent of the Foundation.——The Medical Establishments too, which Dr. Percival had contributed to form, or support, flourished with wider benefit; and afforded the best testimony of their excellence, in the improved health and condition of the lower orders of the community.

It now remains only to add, that in the domestic circle of his kindred and friends, the latest efforts of Dr. Percival's mind were called forth; while he seemed, almost daily, to become more desirous of withdrawing himself from the business of the world, to the social and tranquil pursuits of retirement.† The

† It is not unpleasing to observe, the philosophic sentiments which many distinguished persons have indulged, respecting the real enjoyments of old age; sentiments, it may be remarked, which have almost invariably been accompanied with the love of retirement, and a genuine relish for contemplative occupations. Were the study of letters, or the acquisition of science, capable of furnishing no other less remote benefits, even this blessing might seem to compensate the moderate labour of their cultivation. Whilst men of the world have often complained of the tediousness and insipidity of

clouds of domestic misfortune which had arisen, could not, indeed, be entirely dispelled by any length of time, or effort of reason; but while they “tinged” “with a browner shade the evening of his life,” they wrought a nobler effect in the philosophic calm and cheerful piety of his mind. He seemed to have arrived at that “æra of advanced age,” which he himself describes in one of his latest works, as “presenting to the intelligent, and the virtuous, a scene “of tranquil enjoyment, of obedient appetites, of “well-regulated affections, of maturity in knowledge, and of calm preparation for immortality. “In this serene and dignified state,” he continues, “placed as it were on the confines of two worlds,

age; how different appear to have been the sentiments of those, who, in the vigour of life, have sought the nobler objects of intellectual improvement, and prepared for their declining years the simple gratifications of study and reflection. “I shall soon enter into the “period,” says a celebrated writer, “which, as the most agreeable “of his long life, was selected by the judgment and experience of “the sage Fontenelle. His choice is approved by the eloquent “historian of Nature, (Buffon,) who fixes our moral happiness at “the mature season in which our passions are supposed to be calmed, “our duties fulfilled, our ambition satisfied, our fame and fortune “established on a solid basis. In private conversation, that great and “amiable man added the weight of his own experience; and this “autumnal felicity might be exemplified in the lives of many other “*men of letters.*”

“ the mind of a good man reviews what is past, with
 “ the complacency of an approving conscience, and
 “ looks forward into futurity with humble confidence
 “ in the mercies of GOD; and with devout aspirations
 “ towards his eternal and ever-increasing favour.”

Previous to his last illness, Dr. Percival had enjoyed an exemption from his accustomed malady, the headache, during a longer interval than usual; and his health in other respects had been remarkably favourable. But, on Thursday the 23d of August, 1804, he was seized with a shivering fit, which gradually augmented to some violence, accompanied with pain in his right shoulder. At first he was willing to ascribe the symptoms to a slight rheumatism; but after a restless and unrefreshing night, his disorder on the following day assumed a more serious aspect. A fixed pain in the region of the diaphragm and liver began to be felt, which rapidly increased to a degree of excruciating anguish. The violence of the pain continued during several days; and on its abatement, left the sufferer in a state of extreme debility. At this period, however, some hopes were entertained, that the disorder had spent its force, and that repose and diet only were wanting to invigorate the powers of nature.

But his exhausted strength returned no more; and he at length fell into a profound slumber, in which his existence quietly terminated, on the evening of the thirtieth day of the same month, in the sixty-fourth year of his age.

The spectacle of patient and submissive resignation which Dr. Percival exhibited during his last illness, was truly impressive. At the period when his bodily sufferings were the most acute, the state of his mind evinced the exercise of unbroken fortitude; and when the severity of the pain had abated, and he languished under the oppression of extreme debility, his silent and thoughtful serenity appeared like the foretaste of eternal peace.—On Monday, the third of September, his remains, attended by his three surviving sons, and his son-in-law, were deposited in the grave of his ancestors, in the burial-ground of the parochial church of Warrington; and were consecrated with the last solemnities by his long-esteemed and valued friend, the Rev. Geoffry Hornby, of Winwick.

A mural monument, erected to his memory, by his surviving widow and children, is placed on the South wall of the Chancel, within the church of Warrington;

on which is engraved the following inscription, from
the elegant and pathetic pen of the Rev. Samuel
Parr, LL. D.

THOMAE . PERCIVAL
SCRIPTORI . CVJVS . OPERA . PERMVLTATA . ET . PERPOLITA
PROBITATE . IPSIVS . ET . MORIBVS
AD . OMNEM . MEMORIAM . COMMENDATA . SVNT
MEDICO . RECTISSIMIS . STVDIIIS
MAGNA . QUE . PRVDENTIA . ET . EXERCITATIONE . PRAEDITO
LIBERTATIS
SINE . VLLIS . VERBORVM . PRAESTIGIIS
AVT . LVBRICA . ET . PRAECIPITI . RERVM . NOVARVM . CVPIDITATE
ACERRIMO . VINDICI
MORBORVM . SOLLERTER . ATQVE . HVMANE . CVRANDORVM
ET . VITAE . SAPIENTER . HONESTEQUE . INSTITVENDAE
DOCTISSIMO . AC . SANCTISSIMO . PRAECEPTORI
QVI . VIXIT . ANNOS LXIII . MENSES XI . DIEM I
DECESSIT . TERTIO . KALEND . SEPTEMBR.
ANNO . SACRO . M. DCCC . IV.
ELIZABETHA . PERCIVAL . CONJVS . PIENTISSIMA
ET . NOVEM . LIBERI . SVPERSTITES
PATRIS . DE . SE . OPTIME . MERITI
H. M. P. CC.

The Literary and Philosophical Society of Manchester have erected, over the chair of the President, in the hall where their meetings are held, a mural tablet, to the memory of Dr. Percival; on which is engraved the following inscription:*

This Tablet
is dedicated, by the unanimous vote
of the Literary and Philosophical Society
OF MANCHESTER,
To the Memory of
THOMAS PERCIVAL, M. D. F. R. S. &c.
one of the first Founders, and during twenty years
the revered President, of this Institution,
as a testimony of their grateful sense
of his zeal in promoting their various interests;
of his frequent and valuable contributions
to their Memoirs;
of the Ability, Candour, and Urbanity
with which he directed their discussions,
and of the elegant Manners,
virtuous Conduct, and dignified Piety,
by which his Life was eminently distinguished.
He died August the 30th, 1804.

* The inscription is the composition of Mr. Thomas Henry, of Manchester, the much-respected and valued friend of Dr. Percival; and one of the founders of the Literary Society.

THE preceding account of Dr. Percival's literary Life has anticipated any formal delineation of his moral and intellectual character. Had not the circumstances, indeed, which are there imperfectly recorded, served to exhibit the features of his mind and conduct in their real form, the writer would have declined a task, too arduous and too delicate for the attempt of an avowedly partial biographer. Supported, however, by the testimonies of public and private virtue, which that narrative contains, he may venture, diffidently, to add a few general observations, requisite to complete the purpose he has undertaken.

It may be remarked, that the most valuable gift of nature, a clear and vigorous understanding, with all its faculties alike fitted for exertion, was eminently possessed by the Subject of this Memoir. Fortunately for his intellectual improvement, and perhaps still more so for his happiness, the powers of his mind seemed to be endued with that exact proportion of relative strength, which experience has evinced to be at the same time most favourable to the enlargement of the whole, and best adapted to the cultivation of science and virtue. His education, conducted in

great measure by his own discretion, corresponded with the speculative opinions which he afterwards taught; and by suffering no one of his talents to remain unimproved, nor any important branch of knowledge to pass unnoticed, formed his mind for liberal and comprehensive thought. The fortune of his birth too, while it furnished sufficiently the means and the ambition of intellectual culture, kept his views steadily directed to the attainment of useful science. So that nature and education conspired to furnish him with that habitual energy of thought and conduct, which, when controuled, as in him, by the ~~steady~~ influence of a temperate judgment, invariably conduces to the benefit of mankind.—Simplicity of thought, and consistency of opinion, also strongly characterised his mind; while the variety of his acquisitions combined with the due vigour of his faculties to preserve him from the bias of any particular habits of mental application. Dr. Percival's moral qualities it may be added, displayed the like character of suitable and consistent energy: “so happily
 “were all his virtues tempered together; so justly
 “were they blended; and so powerfully did each
 “prevent the other from exceeding its proper
 “bounds.”

Of his acquaintance with the science of physic, and his skill in the treatment of disease, the most honourable testimonies have been afforded by the best judges of his merit. To the public in general, his Writings may furnish the fairest proof of his talents and industry; but the eminence which he attained in a wide sphere of *practical* exertion, cannot fail to confirm the validity of his reputation. A writer* who has described his accomplishments in eloquent but faithful language, speaks of him as a physician in the following terms: “ His merits as a practitioner of
 “ physic, and not less the benefits conferred by him
 “ on medical science, are too generally understood
 “ and confessed to require any minuteness of detail.
 “ A quick penetration, a discriminating judgment, a
 “ patient attention, a comprehensive knowledge, and,
 “ above all, a deep sense of responsibility, were

* The Rev. William Magee, D.D. Professor of Mathematics in the University of Dublin, &c. &c. This learned divine and accomplished scholar is sufficiently well known to the public by his writings, to render superfluous any testimony of the justness and value of his opinions. It may be observed only, that during a considerable number of years he preserved an intimate personal acquaintance and correspondence with the Subject of this narrative; and that the biographical tribute from which the above extracts are taken, was published in several periodical journals shortly after Dr. Percival's decease.

“ the endowments which so conspicuously fitted him
 “ at once to discharge the duties, and extend the
 “ boundaries, of the healing art. His exterior ac-
 “ complishments and manners were alike happily
 “ adapted to the offices of his profession. To an
 “ address peculiarly engaging, from its uncommon
 “ mixture of dignity, respectfulness, and ease, was
 “ united a gravity of deportment that bespoke the
 “ seriousness of interest, not the gloom of apprehen-
 “ sion. The expression of a benign sympathy, which
 “ on every occasion of distress his features borrowed
 “ from the genuine feelings of the kindest commise-
 “ ration, presented him likewise the comforter in the
 “ physician ; and the topics of encouragement and
 “ consolation which the goodness of his heart, and
 “ the ample stores of a cultivated mind, so abundantly
 “ supplied, enabled him to administer relief to the
 “ wounds of the spirit, with no less efficacy than to
 “ the diseases of the body. In truth, the admirable
 “ picture so lately drawn by his own masterly pencil,
 “ in that volume* in which he has delineated the
 “ requisites and qualifications of the medical practi-
 “ tioner, displays the most exact portraiture of himself;

* Medical Ethics, &c.

“ and whilst he there depicted those excellencies of
 “ the medical character which he approved in theory,
 “ he unconsciously but described those which he every
 “ day exemplified in practice. Indeed, in that most
 “ valuable Treatise, which he expressly dedicated as
 “ a ‘ paternal legacy’ to a much-loved son, and which
 “ may now be regarded as his bequest to his bre-
 “ thren of the faculty, and to the public, he has left
 “ behind him a monument of professional integrity
 “ and honour, which will exhibit him to those of after-
 “ times, what his life and conduct have done to his
 “ cotemporaries, one of the worthiest objects of their
 “ admiration and esteem.”

The love of *moral* science which Dr. Percival's
 later writings conspicuously display, was of early
 origin; and though it was repressed during a consider-
 able period of his academical discipline, yet no sooner
 were the first difficulties of his profession overcome,
 than he indulged freely in the pursuits of his choice.
 The greater part of his leisure, which was never
 abundant, he devoted, for many years, to the study
 of Ethics and Theology. Nor is it improbable, that
 his partiality for the latter acquired early force from
 the investigations into which he was led by his inten-
 tion of entering the university of Oxford; a scheme,

which, it has already been observed, was for some time suspended, and afterwards relinquished, from religious scruples concerning *subscription*.——He delighted at all times to indulge in the contemplation of the rational and moral constitution of man, of his various duties, and his capacity for happiness and improvement; and seemed to derive a pleasure most congenial to his mind from the illustrations that were thus afforded him of the wisdom and beneficence of the divine government. Perhaps, indeed, in the retirement of the closet his speculations sometimes became too enlarged and too refined for the actual condition of mankind; and the benevolence of the philosopher might not always be corrected or subdued by the experience of the man. But even when his speculations were pursued thus far, they testified the uncommon clearness and delicacy of his perceptions, the wide range of his views, and the uniform elegance of his taste.

Neither the studies, however, nor the information of Dr. Percival, were confined to particular walks of knowledge. His claim to the title of a Scholar was by no means inconsiderable; and had not his intercourse with the writings of antiquity been interrupted by professional pursuits, in conjunction with the un-

fortunate failure of his eye-sight, he would probably have attained the consideration in classical learning which his early proficiency announced. Besides the elegance and purity of his English style, his compositions abound with those beauties which can be derived only from a diligent study of the ancient models. They abound too with other proofs of the variety of his acquisitions. His acquaintance both with ancient and modern history, with the classical writings and philosophic disquisitions of the best authors, is often incidentally displayed in his miscellaneous works. His moral treatises especially are furnished with historic details ; which the author has adduced for the purpose of exemplification, and which serve at the same time to illustrate and embellish the doctrines he is desirous to establish. This *mode* of inculcating moral principles, and truths of every kind, that are applicable to the conduct of life, Dr. Percival deemed the safest and most effective ; and it will not be denied, that he has pursued it with greater care and felicity, than any of the writers in our own language, who have aimed at the same method of instruction. On this subject I again refer with pleasure to the opinion of the writer already quoted.

“ In the several volumes of ‘ A Father’s Instructions,
 “ and Moral Differtations,’ which have appeared at
 “ at different periods through a space of twenty-five
 “ years; and which were conceived with the admirable
 “ design of exciting in the hearts of young persons
 “ a desire of knowledge, and a love of virtue; there
 “ is to be found as much of pure style, genuine feel-
 “ ing, refined taste, apt illustration, judicious enforce-
 “ ment, and pious reflection, as can easily be disco-
 “ vered within the same compass in any didactic
 “ composition. Perhaps it is not in the reach
 “ of human ingenuity to execute a work better
 “ adapted to its object; and certainly within the
 “ range of human selection there can be no object
 “ of higher importance, than that which the author
 “ held in view—the intellectual, moral, and religious
 “ improvement of the rising generation. This, in-
 “ deed, was an object always near to his thoughts.
 “ To this he directed the powers of his fancy, the
 “ stores of his memory, and the results of his learn-
 “ ing; and hence his invaluable productions, whilst
 “ they are intelligible and impressivè to the young,
 “ are edifying to the mature, and interesting and
 “ delightful to all. In every sentiment the author is
 “ felt, because he speaks from the heart; in every

“ precept he persuades, because utility is his end; in
 “ every argument he convinces, because truth is his
 “ guide. The merit of these collective works can be
 “ duly appreciated by those only who have carefully
 “ perused their several parts; and of such readers, it
 “ may be safely pronounced, that not one capable of
 “ a relish for what is beautiful in writing, and just in
 “ thinking, has ever closed these volumes without
 “ finding his heart improved, his judgment rectified,
 “ and his taste refined.”

Active, however, and various as were the *talents*
 which Dr. Percival possessed, his claims to the regard
 of posterity will be deemed even more considerable,
 when “ the nobler parts of his character are contem-
 “ plated in the sanctuary of his *virtues*.” In the
 the judgment of those who were well acquainted
 with his conduct, it would appear, I am persuaded,
 no easy matter, to describe in terms too lively or
 unqualified, the singular purity and inflexible recti-
 tude of his nature. A constant command over
 the powers; of his judgment, and a most perfect
 controul over all his passions, acquired by unre-
 mitting pains, seemed to qualify him for the habi-
 tual exercise of virtue, throughout the multiplied
 relations of his life. “ Possessing within himself,”

to use the language of a great writer, “ a salient living principle of generous and manly action,” his conduct was directed implicitly by the rule of his moral judgment, and conformed more perfectly with the standard of intrinsic excellence than is commonly observed even among the most virtuous of mankind. This independence of principle too appeared manifest in that dignity of exterior deportment, which, without effort or affectation, he invariably preserved.* Yet so eminent, at the same time, was the gentleness and the suavity of his temper, that those who were unacquainted with the nobler and rarer virtues which he possessed, readily paid the tribute of respect to these engaging qualities. “ *Nil metus in vultu; gratia oris supererat; bonum virum facile crederes, magnum libenter.*” Perhaps it has hardly ever happened, that

* “ *De toutes les qualités des hommes,*” (says M. Neckar, in his admirable treatise, ‘ *De l’Importance des Opinions Religieuses,*’) “ *la plus rare, et la plus imposante, c’est l’élévation dans les pensées, dans les sentimens, et dans les manières; accord majestueux que la vérité seule peut entretenir, et que la moindre exagération, le plus petit dehors affecté, dérange et fait disparaître. L’élévation ne ressemble point à l’orgueil, encore moins à la vanité; car une de ses beautés est de n’être jamais à la recherche des hommages des autres; l’homme doué d’une véritable élévation se place au dessus même de ses juges; il ne compte qu’avec lui même, il vit sur l’empire de sa conscience; et fier de la dignité d’un tel maître, il ne veut point d’autre dépendance.*”

nature and self-government have so happily conspired, as to form a character more consistent in its parts, more amiable in its energies, or more just and rational in its conduct.

To the investigation of *religious* truths Dr. Percival was accustomed to apply the same candid and patient spirit of enquiry, which he exercised in his various researches into Nature; and he has with equal justness and felicity exposed the danger of indulging a contrary disposition, wherever truth is the object of our pursuit. "Scepticism and credulity," he observes, "are equally unfavourable to the acquisition of knowledge: the latter anticipates, the former precludes all enquiry. One leaves the mind satisfied with error, the other with ignorance; and both magnify trifles into confirmations strong as sacred proofs. The fastidiousness of scepticism, by an instantaneous decision, rejects truth, combined with adventitious falshood. The blindness of credulity adopts falshood, even as a sanction to truth." In another place, speaking of infidel philosophers, he remarks, "Such degrading and unhappy notions often spring from a love of paradox, a passion for novel hypothesis, ambition to be victorious in subtle disputation, and a contempt for established autho-

“ rity; accompanied for the most part with an im-
 “ plicit submission to empirics in science, who dogma-
 “ tize most when they assume the mask of scepticism.
 “ To the successful pursuit of truth,” he declares, (in
 language descriptive of himself,) “ it is necessary to
 “ bring a well-disciplined mind, modest and sober in its
 “ views, and uninfluenced not only by vulgar, but
 “ by philosophical prejudices; which are far more
 “ dangerous, because more plausible and fascinating.
 “ When subjects of theology are investigated, reve-
 “ rence and humility should be associated with all
 “ our reasonings.”

It may be asserted, then, that piety towards God,
 and a deep sense of moral accountableness, were among
 the prevailing and active sentiments of Dr. Percival's
 mind. So intimately, in truth, were they blended
 with his habitual feelings and motives of conduct,
 that the dignity which he derived from them in the
 more important concerns of life, seemed inseparably
 attached even to his familiar actions. His views both
 of natural and revealed religion were of an elevated
 order; such as he conceived to accord with the in-
 structions of the Gospel, and the speculative conclu-
 sions of his reason. But his piety was without gloom,
 and his philosophy without any mixture of austerity.

The strain of seriousness which pervades his moral writings, obviously exhibits the characteristic tendency of his mind. The moral and theological dissertations which are contained in the volume of "*A Father's Instructions*," comprehend a general view of his opinions, together with an examination of some particular doctrines; whilst the beautiful and animated digressions of the same nature, which are annexed to his treatise on *Medical Ethics*, testify his unfading ardour; and will be read with peculiar interest, as the latest effusions of his mind on the favourite topics of his meditation.

The sentiments of an intimate observer and an able judge of Dr. Percival's moral attributes may once more be adduced. "Highly as this excellent man," he declares, "was to be admired and loved for his
 "engaging manners, and his intellectual endowments;
 "these sentiments are yet more forcibly excited by
 "the exalted qualities which dignified and embellished
 "his *moral nature*. These were the precious gems
 "that shed around his character that lustre which
 "made him a public light. From these did all his
 "attainments derive their sterling value. To these
 "were all his other qualifications rendered subser-
 "vient; and from their pervading influence did he

“ acquire that secret charm which gave him an irre-
 “ fiftible ascendant over the affections of all who
 “ knew him. A strict probity and an inviolable
 “ love of truth were, perhaps, the most conspicuous
 “ in the assemblage of these moral graces. From
 “ these, his whole conduct derived a purity and
 “ elevation, such as could spring only from a mind
 “ in which the finest sensibilities of virtue had ever
 “ remained unhurt by the consciousness of dishonour.
 “ It was delightful to behold a man distinguished in a
 “ profession, in which, whether truly or not, reli-
 “ gious scepticism has been supposed to prevail ; pro-
 “ minent in the walks of philosophy, which in latter
 “ times has too often but misled her votaries ; and
 “ honoured in all the literary circles of an age, whose
 “ peculiar pride it has been to undermine established
 “ opinions ; lending the whole weight and mo-
 “ ment of his name and talents to the maintenance
 “ of genuine religion, and the support of Christian
 “ virtues. Educated a Dissenter, he steadily retained
 “ the principles of rational dissent, without descend-
 “ ing to be a partizan. Solicitous upon all occa-
 “ sions to make the Scripture the interpreter and
 “ the test of religious truth, he had imbibed from
 “ the perusal of the sacred volume, an enlightened

“ familiarity with those great truths which must
 “ lie at the foundation of the creed of every sincere
 “ Christian. His religious tenets were therefore
 “ revered by the truly good and candid of all deno-
 “ minations; and by some of the most eminent
 “ divines, and worthiest prelates of the Established
 “ Church, his correspondence and friendly inter-
 “ course were highly esteemed, and his opinions not
 “ unfrequently cited and recommended.”

In the welfare of the State, and in political measures
 of almost every description, Dr. Percival was accus-
 tomed to indulge a lively interest; and on great occa-
 sions the situation of affairs, or the conduct of
 government, seemed to take a hold upon his feelings,
 deeper than is usual even among men more closely
 connected with public proceedings. He fully accorded
 with the sentiments of Mr. Burke, “ that when the
 “ affairs of the nation are distracted, private people
 “ are, by the spirit of the law, justified in stepping
 “ a little out of their ordinary spheres. They enjoy
 “ a privilege of somewhat more dignity and effect,
 “ than that of idle lamentation over the calamities of
 “ their country. They may look into them narrow-
 “ ly, they may reason upon them liberally, and may
 “ sometimes be of service to the cause of government.”

On one occasion only was Dr. Percival's pen employed on the subjects of political disquisition. But his *Essay on Taxation* may afford an example of the general tenor of his principles, and of his claim to the reputation of a temperate and constitutional Whig. Devotedly attached to the welfare of his country, he viewed with a watchful and even jealous eye any tendency towards an incroachment on the great charters of its privileges and happiness. He rejoiced in the possession of freedom, not that it might afford a latitude to political offences, or indulgence to the restless spirit of disobedience, but from a conviction of its powerful and beneficial aid in the advancement of our social nature. Firm in his principles, and moderate in his expectations, he turned with aversion from those schemes of innovation which a philosophic fancy may project, but which insatiable violence, at the signal of authority, may be roused to execute. Those excesses which have recently, and perhaps indelibly, polluted the name of Freedom, he regarded in their genuine forms of horror. But whilst he deprecated the calamities which have followed the licentiousness of French liberty, he lamented, in common with the more enlightened and calm spectators of those events, the permanent

injury which has been sustained to the cause of political reformation in all parts of the world.

The prudence of Dr. Percival in the ordinary business and intercourse of life was marked chiefly by a steady attention to the rule of equity and propriety. In his personal affairs, his commerce with the world was distinguished by the most unremitting spirit of liberality; and his private generosity was not unfrequently betrayed by the unsuspecting confidence which he indulged. In matters, however, of serious concern, his conduct was regulated by the standard of exact and scrupulous rectitude; and his caution in pursuing measures that might affect his own reputation or that of others in the smallest degree, was a conspicuous part of his character.—By this habitual prudence he conciliated to an uncommon degree the regard of those around him, and excited an universal sentiment of deference, which preserved him even from the contagion of party spirit. In the course of a long life of active usefulness, he had frequent occasion to reflect with satisfaction on the temperate and measured system which he had pursued; while he might derive some gratification from the frequent demand of his services as a candid and judicious moderator.

The personal frame of Dr. Percival was about the middle stature; but slender, and not adapted to any considerable exertions of strength. The delicacy of his constitution proscribed the violent or long-continued exercise of his bodily powers; so that he was seldom capable of enduring much fatigue.—His address was pleasing, and his countenance, especially on a first approach, bespoke in an eminent degree the inviting benevolence of his heart. Neither in public or private society was he embarrassed by unforeseen or untoward occurrences; his dexterity, on the contrary, in obviating unexpected difficulties, was singularly happy.—In the company of strangers, of his family, or friends, his conversation was alike cheerful, polite, and varied. A dignified affability, expressive of corresponding virtues, and improved by an habitual attention to the more elegant forms of intercourse, was the uniform attribute of his manner; whilst the congeniality of that manner with the temper and pursuits of the individual stamped upon it the most genuine character of simplicity. “*Tanta illi comitas*
“*in socios; visuque et auditu juxta venerabilis !*”

POSTSCRIPT.

IF the preceding narrative shall have served in any adequate degree to illustrate the *character* and *opinions* of its venerable Subject, the purpose of the writer will be fulfilled, and his hopes sufficiently rewarded. That the representation he has drawn will be recognized as the entire or perfect image of Dr. Percival's mind, he cannot presume to expect; sensible as he is, that if the habits of relationship may have afforded him an ample acquaintance with the circumstances of his subject, they may also have extended his views beyond the limit of disinterested judgment; or on the other hand, if they have given him the opportunity of nearer and more accurate observation,

they may have led him to the inexcusable error of magnifying unimportant details. He can assert, however, with confidence, that he has endeavoured to express in faithful language those sentiments which are deeply engraven on his own mind; and, that, however imperfect be the success of that endeavour, he shall secure the satisfaction of having gratified, for a laudable purpose, his feelings of filial veneration, “*et, in contemplatione vitæ per virtutem actæ, desiderium patris, solatiis honestis, tolerandi.*”

With respect to the *Correspondence* of Dr. Percival, which forms a part of the preceding Narrative, it may be proper to observe, that although his own Letters furnish an imperfect specimen of his talents and various qualifications as an epistolary writer; yet as they comprehend the most valuable or appropriate of those communications which accident has preserved, their publication has been deemed advisable; more especially, since the extensive correspondence which Dr. Percival maintained with persons of eminence in various departments, has diffused a very general opinion of the interest and value of his private communications. From such sources undoubtedly may have arisen the credit which he merited, by his skill in epistolary composition, a favourite

amusement of his leisure. But the fugitive and perishable nature of such compositions, and the scanty number of duplicates which Dr. Percival preserved by his amanuenses, have prevented the Editor from gratifying the public as amply as might be wished; and from effecting a purpose which he had confidently hoped,—of rendering the Subject of the narrative, in a great measure, his own Biographer.

In concluding these Memoirs of a life eminently laudable and useful, and of a character virtuous and accomplished beyond the degree which excites ordinary admiration, it is consolatory to record the testimonies of public esteem and private friendship, which attended the *loss* of the individual in whom they were united. The effusions of personal respect and affection which that melancholy event drew from a wide circle of acquaintance, furnished a pleasing proof, that, in the estimation of intimate observers, no man perhaps ever left behind him more lively memorials of his virtue. The public tributes of veneration offered to his memory, were equally disinterested and gratifying. But it is probable that those individuals only who pursued the steps of Dr. Percival from the active scenes of life to the retirement of domestic privacy, could be adequately acquainted with the purity

of his sentiments, the suavity of his temper, the wisdom and fortitude of his conduct; so true is it, in the language of the Roman writer, "*fuit ille vir*" "*cum foris clarus tum domi admirandus; neque rebus*" "*externis magis laudandus, quam institutis domesticis.*"

The following Inscription merits a place in these records, as a mingled testimony of public respect and private esteem. It is the production of the classical pen of Dr. Parr; and was originally designed for the Tablet which the Literary and Philosophical Society of Manchester has dedicated to the memory of Dr. Percival.

THOMAE . PERCIVAL

QUI . NON . SOLUM . AD . SOCIETATEM . MANCUNIENSEM

CONSTITUENDAM

CONSILIO . HORTATU . AUCTORITATE

INCUBUIT

SED . CONSTITUTAM

ANIMO . ERUDITO

SCRIPTIS . ELEGANTISSIMIS

SINGULARI . MORUM . COMITATE

MULTUM . ET . DIU . ORNAVIT

SODALES . EJUS . SUPERSTITES

HANC . MARMOREAM . TABELLAM

D. S. I.

P. CC.

APPENDIX.

NOTE (A) PAGE XXXV.

THE facts which relate to the Population, of the town and neighbourhood of Manchester, are so curious, that I am induced to insert in this place a concise statement of them, together with the remarks to which they gave rise. “ At the close of the “ year 1772,” says Dr. Percival, “ an account was collected from “ every *country* chapel, both episcopal and dissenting, in the parish, “ of the baptisms and burials of that year. The former were found “ to amount to 401; the latter to 246; and there is a presumption “ that this is nearly the annual proportion of deaths in the parish of “ Manchester, *exclusive* of the town and township. For the number “ of burials in the whole parish was in the same year exactly 1,200; “ and it has been shewn, that the deaths in the town of Manchester, “ are one year with another 958. This sum being subtracted from “ 1,200, leaves a remainder (242) for the country, very nearly equal “ to 246; and if 13,786, the number of people in the parish, be “ divided by 246, it will appear that only 1 in 56, of the inhabitants, dies annually; whilst the yearly mortality in Manchester “ is 1 in 28. Such a striking disparity in the healthiness of a large “ town, and the country which surrounds it, granting it to be less “ than has been supposed, will scarcely be credited by those who

“ have paid no attention to inquiries of this nature ; and it must
 “ afford matter of astonishment even to the physician and the philo-
 “ sopher, when he reflects, that the inhabitants of both live in the
 “ same climate, carry on the same manufactures, and are chiefly
 “ supplied with provisions from the same market. But his surprize
 “ will give way to concern and regret, when he observes the havoc
 “ produced in every large town, by luxury, irregularity, and in-
 “ temperance ; the numbers that fall annual victims to contagious
 “ distempers, which never cease to prevail ; and the pernicious in-
 “ fluence of confinement, uncleanness, and foul air, on the dimi-
 “ nution of life.”

It is obvious that the result of these and similar inquiries does not extend to a solution of the great question respecting the means of increasing or diminishing *national* population.

NOTE (B.) PAGE lviii.

Extract of a Letter from BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, LL.D.
to Dr. PERCIVAL, dated London, 1771.

“ ON my return to London, I found your favour of the 16th of
 May. I wish I could, as you desire, give you a better
 explanation of the phenomenon in question, since you seem not
 quite satisfied with your own ; but I think we want more and a
 greater variety of experiments in different circumstances, to enable
 us to form a thoroughly-satisfactory hypothesis.—I will endeavour
 to explain to you what occurred to me when I first heard of the fact.

"I suppose it will be generally allowed, on a little consideration of the subject, that scarce any drop of water was, when it began to fall from the clouds, of a magnitude equal to that it has acquired when it arrives at the earth. The same of the several pieces of hail; because they are often so large and weighty, that we cannot conceive a possibility of their being suspended in the air, and remaining at rest there for any time, how small soever; nor do we conceive any means of forming them so large before their fall. It seems then, that each beginning drop and particle of hail receives continual addition in its progress downwards. This may be several ways; by the union of numbers in their course, so that what was at first only a descending mist becomes a shower; or by each particle, in its descent through air that contains a great quantity of dissolved water, striking against, attaching to itself, and carrying down with it, such particles of that dissolved water as happen to be in its way; or *attracting to itself such as do not lie directly in its course, by its different state, either with regard to common or electric fire*, or by all these causes united.

"In the *first* case, by the uniting of numbers, larger drops might be made, but the quantity falling in the same space would be the *same at all heights*; unless, as you mention, the whole should be contracted in falling, the lines described by all the drops converging; so that what set out to fall from a cloud of many thousand acres, should reach the earth in perhaps a third of that extent; of which I somewhat doubt.

"In the *other* case, we have two experiments. 1. A dry glass bottle filled with very cold water will presently collect from the seemingly dry air that surrounds it, a quantity of water that shall cover its surface, and run down its sides; which perhaps is done by the power wherewith the cold water attracts the fluid, common fire, that had been united with dissolved water in the air, and drawing that fire through the glass into itself, leaves the water on the outside. 2. An *electrified* body left in a room for some time will be more covered with dust than other bodies in the same room not electrified, which dust seems to be *attracted from the circumambient air*.

“Now we know, that the rain, even in our hottest days, comes from a very cold region. Its falling sometimes in the form of ice shews this clearly; and perhaps even the rain is snow or ice when it first moves downwards, though thawed in falling: and we *know that the drops of rain are electrified*. But those causes of addition to each drop of water, or piece of hail, one would think, could not long continue to produce the same effect; since the air through which the drops fall must soon be stripped of its previously dissolved water, so as to be no longer capable of augmenting them. Indeed very heavy showers of either are never of long continuance; but moderate rains often continue so long as to puzzle this hypothesis. So that upon the whole, I think, as I intimated before, that we are yet hardly ripe for making one.”

The philosophical reader may perhaps be of opinion, that the foregoing speculations tend rather to confirm than to invalidate the probability of Dr. Percival's hypothesis; especially as the writer has himself adopted the *electric* supposition of *convergency*, in order to complete his explanation.—By the obliging permission of the Bishop of Landaff, I annex the following very ingenious communication on the same subject, which his Lordship transmitted to Dr. Percival many years ago.

“*Trumpington, near Cambridge, July 12, 1774.*”

“I AM much obliged to you, not only for the papers which you have had the goodness to communicate to me by letter, but for your ingenious treatise *on the Poison of Lead*; which nothing but the extreme hurry of my affairs in the University could have prevented me from acknowledging sooner. With respect to *the different quantities of rain falling at different heights*, I once thought that the phenomenon might be illustrated by the following considerations. Let us suppose the earth to be a globe of rock salt, and to be covered with water to the height of five miles; and imagining

the water to be divided into sperical shells of equal thickneſſes, (ſuppoſe one hundred yards each,) it is clear to me that the firſt ſhell contiguous to the ſurface of the ſalt would contain a much greater quantity of ſalt in ſolution than the ſecond, the ſecond more than the third, the third than the fourth, and ſo on. For the water immediately contiguous to the ſalt would ſaturate itſelf; and from that circumſtance becoming ſpecifically heavier than the water at the diſtance of a mile, or a quarter of a mile, it would not, from the ordinary motion of the winds and tides, mix itſelf uniformly with the whole maſs of water. Now let us ſuppoſe all the diſſolved ſalt to be precipitated, and the precipitation to begin from the top; it is evident that the quantity of the precipitate will increaſe, not ſimply with the increaſe of the ſpace through which it has deſcended, but in a higher ratio, inasmuch as the laſt ſhell through which it deſcends may be ſuppoſed to contain 50 or 100 times as much as the firſt. Again, inſtead of ſuppoſing the ſhells of water to be of the ſame denſity, and as ſuch capable of diſſolving equal quantities of ſalt, let them decreaſe in denſity in any high ratio, as their diſtance from the ſurface of the ſalt increaſes; and it will from that ſuppoſition alſo follow, that a much greater quantity of ſalt muſt be ſuſpended in the ſhell contiguous to the ſalt, than in any of the reſt.—You will readily perceive that theſe ſuppoſitions are wholly analogous to that of the air brooding over the ſurface of the earth; the lower ſhells of which will be, it ſhould ſeem, much more loaded with water than the higher, upon the *hypotheſis* that water is diſſolved in air, as ſalt in water. It was in ſome ſuch way as this that I endeavoured, about three years ago, in a letter to Dr. Heberden, to explain the phenomenon *you have ſo much better* illustrated. When I get a little leiſure from the buſineſs of my office, I intend to reſume my chemical ſtudies, and ſhall always be happy in hearing from you upon any ſubject touching natural knowledge.”

NOTE (C.) PAGE lxvii.

ON the 15th of May, 1780, Dr. Percival sustained the loss of a daughter, in the third year of her age; and on the 25th day of the same month died one of his sons, a year younger in age. His sentiments on this trying occasion are expressed in the following short communication to one of his most esteemed friends:—

“In my last letter, I expressed my sympathy in your late paternal sufferings. Soon, I fear, it will be my unhappy lot to experience the like myself. My youngest daughter, who is about the age of the one you lost, was attacked by the hooping-cough a fortnight ago. Violent pneumonic symptoms ensued, and these have terminated in a consumption of the lungs, accompanied with the strongest symptoms of hectic fever I ever saw in so young a subject. I have four other children indisposed. One has the hooping-cough severely.

“Farewell, my dear friend! Convinced as we both are of the rectitude, wisdom, and goodness of the Deity, I trust we have not now to learn gratitude for his favours, and acquiescence in his appointments.”

The following Inscriptions, dedicated by Dr. Percival to the memory of his Children, may justly be deemed admirable for their piety, simplicity, and pathos.

On Monday May the 15th, M. DCC. LXXX.

died, of the Hooping-Cough,

complicated with

Hætic Fever and Pulmonary Consumption,

MARIA PERCIVAL,

in the third year of her age.

She was interred at Warrington,

in the Chapel Yard,

on the 18th day of the same month.

Farewell, my beloved MARIA!

Afflictive long will be thy loss;

yet, sweet

the Memory of thy dawning Virtues.

Thy meek and gentle Spirit,

too tender for resistance, too sincere for art,

with no defence

save Innocence and Love,

might have suffered many a painful wound,

in the conflicts of

Human Life:

And,

THAT BEING,

The Dispensations of whose Providence

are ever

kind, and wise, and just,

has taken thee early

not prematurely

to

HIMSELF:

“FOR OF SUCH IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.”

On Thursday May the 25th, M. DCC. LXXX.

died,

Of the Hooping-Cough, and Acute Asthma,

EDWARD BAYLEY PERCIVAL,

in the second year of his age.

He

was interred on the following Sunday,

at Warrington,

in the same vault

with his Sister and inseparable companion.

Take back,

O! GOD

Thy dear, thy latest gift!

A Mother's Solace, and a Father's Hope!

Pity the parting pang

so soon renewed!

Forgive this Sigh

that faintly utters

"LET THY WILL BE DONE!"

NOTE (D.) PAGE lxxii.

THE following letters are inserted in this place, as a testimony of the gracious manner in which his Majesty was pleased to signify his acceptance of the Address of the Manchester Society.

From Dr. PERCIVAL to the Right Hon. WILLIAM PITT.

SIR,

"Manchester, Feb. 19, 1785.

"THE Literary and Philosophical Society of Manchester have a volume of Memoirs in the press, which is nearly completed; and they are ambitious to inscribe their first-fruits to the King. I am there-

fore commissioned to request your good offices with his Majesty, as our solicitor on this occasion. The papers to be published have been carefully selected from the inclosed list; and many of them have been delivered or transmitted by persons of distinguished rank in the republic of letters. You may therefore, I trust, be assured that the work will not disgrace the Royal Patronage. It gives me some pain to trouble you with any application, which may in the slightest degree interrupt your very important engagements at this interesting period of public business: but the Marquis of Lansdown, with his usual friendliness, informs me, that propriety requires I should write, either to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, or to you. And I am influenced to address myself, in the name of our Society, to Mr. Pitt, from the high respect I entertain for his character, as well as from the secret pride I feel in soliciting a favour from one to whom I should deem it a peculiar honour to be obliged.

“With the most cordial wishes for your health, happiness, and success, I have the honour to be, Sir, your faithful and obedient humble servant, &c.”

From the Right Hon. WILLIAM PITT to Dr. PERCIVAL.

SIR,

“*Downing-Street, April 28.*”

“I Received the favour of your letter; and have in consequence taken an opportunity of laying before the King the request of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Manchester, that they may be permitted to inscribe a volume of their Memoirs to his Majesty; and I am happy to inform you that his Majesty has been graciously pleased to authorize me to signify his consent.

“I think myself much flattered by the manner in which this commission has been conveyed to me; and have the honour to be, with great respect, Sir, your most obedient and most faithful servant, &c.

From the Right Hon. WILLIAM PITT to Dr PERCIVAL.

SIR,

" Downing-Street, November, 1785.

" I HAVE received your favour of the 11th instant, and also the two copies of the Memoirs of the Literary and Philosophical Society; and agreeably to the wishes of the gentlemen, I have this day presented one of the copies to his Majesty, who was pleased to accept it very graciously.

" Permit me at the same time to request, that you will assure the Society that I feel very sensibly their polite attention to me upon the occasion; and that you will believe me to be, with great respect, Sir, your most obedient humble servant, &c."

NOTE (E.) PAGE lxxii.

THE following are extracts from some communications of M. Froissard, of Lyons, the ingenious and intelligent author of a work, entitled "*La Cause des Esclaves Nègrés, et des Habitans de la Guinée.*" The letters are addressed to Dr. Percival, and will be found to contain criticisms on "the Tribute to the Memory of M. de Polier," on the volumes of "A Father's Instructions," and other smaller pieces, which M. Froissard successively translated into the French language. Some complimentary and irrelevant passages are omitted.

(Translations.)

" Lyons, March 3, 1783.

" I Received by a friend, a few days ago, your Tribute to the Memory of Charles de Polier, esq. I read this little work with much pleasure, and have found it as just as it is elegant and pathetic.

Perceiving the design of your Society, in communicating the Eloge to me, I hasten to fulfil their wishes, by executing a translation of it.—The countryman, the companion, the friend of him whose loss you deplore ; I recognize in every feature of your description the delineation of truth. I observe with satisfaction the praises which you have conferred, and your estimation of the qualities of the heart above those of the understanding. M. de Polier is painted in colours the most natural; illustrating not only his mind, but your own. From this perusal, I cannot but imagine that I see and am acquainted with you. The value of knowledge, virtue, and modesty, is never so powerfully inculcated, as when they are exemplified in the character of the writer.

— — “ I shall avail myself of an opportunity which conveys to England Dr. Blair’s volumes, to send you a few specimens of my *translation* of your eloquent Eloge ; &c. &c.

“ *Lyons, Aug. 1, 1783.*

“ I Received by my old and respected friend M***, the excellent work (“ A Father’s Instructions”) which you had the goodness to send me, and I perused it with avidity. There is nothing more justly interesting than to see a wife and tender parent devoting his leisure to the improvement of young minds ; and by a variety of instructive lessons, inspiring them with the love of truth, justice, and usefulness. You will reap the fruit of a system of education so rational and engaging ; and its value will be felt by your country, as well as by your family. I am desirous to transmit to my countrymen a treasure so precious, and defer the translation only till my completion of Dr. Blair’s Sermons.

“ The death of M. de Polier, the father, has changed the arrangement relative to your eloquent “ Tribute,” &c. Madame de Croufaz, the sister of your friend, had designed to translate her brother’s éloge ; but since the death of her father, she has begged me to send her the version that I had prepared, without delay. I obeyed her wishes, and received a most affecting letter in reply. She

informs me of additional losses which she has sustained, and of the weak state to which her afflictions have reduced her.

‘I have read (she says) and transcribed your translation of Dr. Percival’s éloge with a flood of tears, which will convince you of the impression it made on my mind. It has been read, and most deservedly admired, by every person of taste and judgment in Laufanne. I intended to acknowledge your favour, and inform you of our decision not to publish any of my brother’s papers. My weak health has been almost destroyed by anxieties, and I was scarcely able to recollect my ideas concerning my beloved and lamented brother, and to follow my late relatives to the grave, when I was assailed by new afflictions. * * *

‘Such, Sir, is the melancholy detail of the calamities with which our family has been overwhelmed. It has pleased God in his wisdom thus to afflict us; happy those whom he has taken to Himself! All our friends here have read the éloge; but since the death of our father we ourselves have relinquished the office of publishing it. Every one would have pardoned the tenderness and pride of the father of such a son; but in us it might be presumptuous to execute the task. If, however, the publication could be made, without our appearing forward in the work, I confess it would delight me.’

“To comply with the desire of this amiable woman, I have resolved, if the translation meet with your approbation, to join it to your “Instructions,” as a work of the same author.” * * *

“*London, Dec. 1784.*”

“I Hoped, even to this day, that my interesting journey to Manchester and Edinburgh would be accomplished before winter. But the snow which now covers the country, and the extreme cold, oblige me to defer till March the pleasure of your society, and the personal acknowledgment of your repeated kindness.

“Your letter and elegant “Moral and Literary Dissertations,” awaited my arrival in London. A few days afterwards I had the honour of being presented to the Queen; and in the course of our conversation, this amiable Princess enquired whether any Treatise

on Education had lately appeared. You will easily believe that I strongly recommended your works, as adapted equally to improve the heart and understanding of young persons. The Queen was unacquainted with them, and expressed her surprise that they had not been procured for her. She gave orders for them in consequence. I lent the Princesses your second volume, which I had carried to London, and read to them the Socratic Discourse on Truth. I was much thanked on my departure.

* * * “You must not express your obligations to me for having translated your interesting works; it is to the public I render the service.—Elementary books for young persons are much wanted in France. Your’s present an excellent system of morals, captivating in style, and the topics of disquisition. They ought to be made known in our language with every advantage; but the veil of translation must inevitably conceal their beauties. I am solicitous to receive the last part, that the whole may be completed.

“Accept, dear Sir, the assurance of respect and attachment from him who most anxiously seeks your esteem and friendship; and who has the honour to remain with much consideration, &c. &c.”

NOTE (F.) PAGE clxxix.

IN his early youth Mr. James Percival displayed a vigour of understanding and clearness of apprehension, which are rarely evinced even in riper age. On quitting school, he passed some time in the study of mathematics and natural science under the guidance of an able master; and from his taste and rapid proficiency in these pursuits, there is reason to believe that he might have arrived at emi-

nence, had he chosen to persevere in that line of application. In his eighteenth year he was placed under the private tuition of Dr. Aikin, who then resided at Yarmouth, and whose friendly and instructive intercourse he enjoyed for some time. At the close of this period a few months were occupied by a *tour* through some parts of Germany and Holland, terminated by a short residence at Leyden. On his return from the Continent, Mr. Percival proceeded to the University of Edinburgh, where he engaged with diligence and success in the studies of Medical science. From this place he transferred his residence to St. John's College, Cambridge; but becoming averse to the long period of delay which at that University is required for the degree of Doctor of Physic, he returned once more to Edinburgh; where he was engaged in completing the course of his Academical discipline,—when the fatal circumstance of his death happened, and the bright prospect of his maturing years vanished for ever!

The respect and affection which Dr. Percival cherished for the memory of his son, are expressed in two tributary inscriptions, (written in Latin;) one of which is engraved on his tomb-stone, in the burial-place of the Chapel of ease, Bristow-street, Edinburgh; the other is preserved as a family record, and testifies the high value which Dr. Percival entertained of his son's moral and intellectual endowments. The following are the concluding lines :

*O! mi Fili honorande,
quem, in sublime elatum,
non lugere fas est,
quando iterum te aspiciam?
quandoque licebit
tecum denuo quærere verum,
arcana naturæ explorare,
penetralia mentis recludere,
et
philosophiæ sacræ
integros fontes accedere atque haurire,
Summo Numine
presente ac favente
omne in ævum?*

NOTE (G.) PAGE CCI.

Copy of Dr. PERCIVAL's Communication to the Board of Health.

"January 7th, 1796.

"THE objects of the Board of Health are three-fold:

"I. To obviate the generation of diseases:

"II. To prevent the spreading of them by contagion:

"III. To shorten the duration of existing diseases, and to mitigate their evils, by affording the necessary aids and comforts to those who labour under them.

"Under the first head are comprehended,—The inspection and improvement of the general accommodations of the poor; the prohibition of such habitations as are so close, noisome, or damp, as to be incapable of being rendered tolerably salubrious; the removal of privies placed in improper situations; provision for white-washing and cleansing the houses of the poor, twice every year; attention to their ventilation, by windows with open casements, &c.; the inspection of cotton-mills, or other factories, at stated seasons, with regular returns of the condition, as to health, clothing, appearance, and behaviour of the persons employed in them; of the time allowed for their refreshment at breakfast and dinner; of the number of hours assigned for labour; and of the accommodations of those who are parochial apprentices, or who are not under the immediate

direction of their parents or friends; the limitation and regulation of lodging-houses, or the establishment of caravanseras for passengers, or those who come to seek employment unrecommended or unknown; the establishment of public warm and cold baths; provision for particular attention to the cleaning of streets which are inhabited by the poor, and for the speedy removal of dunghills, and every species of filth; the diminution, as far as is practicable, of other noxious effluvia, such as those which arise from the work-houses of the fell-monger, the yards of the tanner, and the slaughter-houses of the butcher; the superintendence of the several markets; with a view to the prevention of the sale of putrid flesh, or fish, and of unsound flour, or other vegetable productions.

Under the second general head are included,—The speedy removal of those who are attacked with symptoms of fever, from the cotton-mills, or factories, to the habitations of their parents or friends, or to commodious houses, which should be set apart for the reception of the sick in the different districts of Manchester; the requisite attentions to preclude unnecessary communications with the sick in the houses wherein they are confined, and to the subsequent cleansing and ventilation of their chambers, bedding, and apparel; and the allowance of a sufficient time for perfect recovery, and complete purification of their clothes, before they return to their homes, or mix with their companions in labour.

“ Under the third head are comprehended,—Medical attendance; the care of nurses; and supplies of medicine, wine, appropriate diet, fuel, and clothing.

“ I. Enquire into the powers of the committee of police, and whether they be not competent both to originate and effectuate the proposed reforms?

“ II. Or whether *aboard of health* might not with more propriety, because with more legal authority, be appointed by the committee of police, to act under their auspices, and to hold from time to time a communication with them?

“ III. Or might not a *board of health* be nominated by the magistrates of the quarter-sessions, and act under their auspices, in connection with the committee of police?”

*Copy of a Letter from Dr. HAYGARTH, of Chester,
to Dr. PERCIVAL.*

“ MY DEAR FRIEND,

January 6th, 1806.

“ YOU desire me to communicate some observations on the best means of stopping the progress of the low fever, at present very Prevalent in Manchester, and its neighbourhood.

“ You may remember, that in the Chester Infirmary we have, for the last twelve years, received all infectious fever patients, that require our assistance, into the fever wards, one for each sex, appropriated to this purpose.

“ This institution arose from the speculations, which you know had engaged my attention, on the nature of contagion. Numerous facts having proved that a person liable to the small-pox was not infected by a patient in the distemper, when placed at a very little distance, I next considered the nature of the contagion, which produces putrid fevers;—I soon discovered that their infectious atmosphere was limited to much narrower extent than even the small-pox. So manifestly I observed this to be the case, that in a clean well-aired room, of a moderate size, the contagious poison is so much diluted with fresh air, that it very rarely produces the distemper, even in nurses exposed to all the putrid miasms of the breath, perspiration, fæces, &c. Whereas, in the close, dirty, and small rooms of the poor, the whole family generally catch the fever. Hence we may conclude, that in a well-aired and clean apartment, the air is seldom so fully impregnated with the poison as to acquire an infectious quality.

“ On these considerations, I ventured to propose the admission of typhous fevers into the attic story, on one side of our Infirmary, to be separated into two wards. From the experience of a dozen

years, I am warranted to maintain the safety of this measure, if conducted under very easy practicable regulations. During this period, it never was suspected that infection has been communicated to a single patient in other parts of the house.

“Farther, I maintain that an establishment of this kind is indispensably necessary in all Infirmarys, to preserve them from what is called the hospital fever. You may remember that I have collected a considerable number of cases to prove, that typhous contagion, in some instances, remains in the body many days, and even weeks, in a *latent* state, before the symptoms of fever commence. Patients ill of other disorders, are admitted into the Infirmary from infectious houses, where they have caught the poison. The fever begins *after* their admission, and frequently infects others in the same ward;—when there is not a due attention to fresh air and cleanliness; or when several patients, thus previously infected, are admitted into the same ward. But in the Chester Infirmary, every fever patient as soon as observed, is immediately removed into the fever wards, so as to preserve all the rest of the house perfectly free from contagion.

“During this war, Chester has been unusually exposed to the danger of putrid infectious fevers. Many new-raised regiments, coming from Ireland, with numerous recruits, taken out of jails, remained in Chester for a few weeks after their voyage. Great numbers of these soldiers, and their women, were ill of putrid fevers, and were immediately received into the fever wards of our Infirmary. If such contagious patients had been distributed in the public-houses, and poor lodging-houses, through this city, the consequences to many of our inhabitants must have been dreadful.

“By taking out of a house the first person who sickens of a fever, we preserve the rest of the family from infection, together with an indefinite number of their neighbours, who would otherwise catch the infection. At this very time, when the inhabitants of Manchester, and many other places, are afflicted with a fatal contagious epidemic, only two patients are now in our fever wards, and both convalescent: and the Apothecary to the Infirmary, who attends the out-poor of the whole city, informs me that he has now not a single fever patient under his care.

“ Sometimes, but very seldom, our two fever wards have been somewhat crowded with patients. I should judge that about four or six spacious wards might be sufficient for Manchester, though the inhabitants are much more populous, and perhaps more liable to fevers, from their unhealthy dwellings, occupations, &c.

“ To one of your sagacious discernment, it would be superfluous to say that the observations above advanced are founded upon such numerous facts, that they must give conviction to every impartial inquirer, not only of the safety, but of the efficacy, of the proposed regulations.

“ I am confident that our two fever wards do ten times more real good in the prevention of misery, than all the other parts of the Infirmary.”

NOTE (H.) PAGE ccii.

IN the early part of his life, Mr. Percival was destined for the profession of physic; and accordingly, after residing two years at St John's College, in the University of Cambridge, he proceeded to Edinburgh, where he attended the lectures of the Medical Professors. But his distaste for these pursuits was soon manifest, and he remained there during one session only. His preference for the clerical profession, which he had early indulged, began to increase in proportion as he relinquished other views; and he at length resolved on returning to Cambridge, where he pursued his theological and moral studies, without interruption, during three years. He proceeded to the degree of LL.B. in the year 1789; and shortly after received ordination from his diocesan the Bishop of Chester. About the same period he was nominated, by the obli-

ging friendship of the late Marquis of Waterford, one of his Lordship's chaplains; and was appointed by the Rev. Geoffry Hornby, rector of Winwick in Lancashire, one of the curates of that parish. In this retirement he continued for some time, experiencing on all occasions the liberal and active kindness of his patron. But a vacancy occurring in the church belonging to the Factory of British Merchants at St. Petersburg, he was induced to declare himself candidate for the office of Chaplain; and by the zealous exertions of several of his friends connected with that settlement, he succeeded in gaining the appointment. In consequence of this determination, he set sail from England, and arrived at St. Petersburg in September, 1792.

The integrity and the assiduity with which Mr. Percival discharged the various functions of his profession, were testified on more than one occasion, by the unsolicited marks of the Company's respect and liberality; and at the melancholy period of his decease, the Factory unanimously adopted the resolution of attending his remains to the grave, and bearing the charge of his public interment. An account of this ceremony, which was transmitted from St. Petersburg, states, that 'eight of the principal gentlemen of the Factory were pall-bearers; and his corpse was followed to the place of burial by upwards of one hundred and fifty of his countrymen, with heavy hearts. A neat plain stone,' it is added, 'marks where one of the best men that ever died in this country lies.'

